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**This Man**  
**TRUMAN**

I ask only to be a good and  
faithful servant of my Lord  
and my people.

HARRY S. TRUMAN





PRESIDENT TRUMAN IN 1945  
*Photo Associated Press*

*Fr.*

# This Man TRUMAN

*by*

FRANK McNAUGHTON

*and*

WALTER HEHMEYER



LONDON

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## CHAPTER ONE

### *The Family*

THERE was no particular celebration on May 8, 1884, in the little town of Lamar, Barton County, Western Missouri, north of the lead-mining centre of Joplin.

Word went up and down the street that the Trumans had a baby—a boy who kicked and squalled lustily and seemed to be singularly unmarked by destiny for anything greater than a life behind the plough or behind the counters of some cross-roads store.

The first-born was promptly named Harry S., after a bachelor uncle, Harrison Young. The S. indicated nothing in particular. It was merely an initial adopted because it stood for each of the grandfathers : Anderson Shippe Truman and Solomon Young. In later years the boy was to prefer the name Shippe, but the initial never bore other than nameless significance.

This birth in Lamar, Missouri, was perhaps an inauspicious beginning for a future President of the United States, but the fact that Harry Truman arrived in the White House after sixty-one years is eloquent testimony to the miracle of American government, which reaches down into obscure hamlets to raise up men from the sinews of the people.

Lamar in 1884 was a pretty little village of some eight hundred souls. Its streets were rutted by wagons and buggies which the hill folk of the Ozarks—simple, sometimes ignorant, but deeply sincere people—drove into town every Saturday to buy salt, pepper, sugar, calico, perhaps a bit of candy, and a few other essentials of life.

This is rolling country, and its hills rise round a rugged, rambling terrain of deep and verdant green, furred over with stout oak, exquisitely beautiful and restful when mantled by the rainy mists that brush and scour along their tops. In such hamlets life radiates from the post office, from the grocery store, or from the county fair, for it is at such places that the farmers and the townfolk gather to discuss crops, the local news, visits, births, deaths, and biscuit-barrel politics. There is nothing here of grandness or classicism. The dance is still predominantly the old-fashioned square. The musical instruments are a piano for sounding chords, a fiddle for carrying the melody, and perhaps an occasional guitar. Still favourite tunes are the old stand-bys like *The Irish Washerwoman*, *Turkey in the Straw*, and the ever-loved *Missouri waltz*.

The village is laid out in square blocks. The houses are mostly frame structures inelegantly built and deeply pitted and browned by the lashing rains and thunderstorms that sweep through the foothills. In May this country is at its best, with spring crowding winter gently away, the grass greening beneath the freshet showers, the brooks plentifully supplied with perch, and flowers coming into full blossom.

This is not a dramatic country; rather a country of quiet hills and of simple folk who know and think not a great deal of the world outside. Some of them say 'poke' for bag, 'kin' for can, 'hit' for it, and 'injun' for engine. They discuss the crops and the local society, but seldom indulge in high politics or world theories. Theirs is a lot circumscribed by their restful hills, the intensity of grubbing out an existence, and the joys and woes of their neighbours, whom they know intimately and love generously. It is rural America, the Northern edge of the Ozarks, where, as has been said, the people "shingle the roof with a bull-hide and use the tail for a lightning rod."

Most of the farms are small, forty and fifty and a hundred acres, devoted to pasture, hay, and some corn for winter

feeding. The ever-elemental question is, "How is your corn crop this year?"

Both sides of the Truman family fitted into these simple rural surroundings. Yet by all standards they were comfortably fixed, and this branch of the family might even be said to have been well off.

Anderson Shippe Truman, the paternal grandfather, and his wife, Mary Jane Holmes Truman, arrived in Western Missouri, then a comparative frontier, at about the same time that the maternal grandfather, Solomon Young, and his wife, Harriet Louise Gregg Young, packed their belongings and travelled by river-boat down the Ohio, up the Mississippi, then up the Missouri, finally establishing themselves at old Westport Landing, near Independence, Missouri, the eastern terminus of the wagon freight routes to the romantic West.

This was in the early 1840's, and both families had come to Missouri from Shelby County, Kentucky. There is a story, often told about the Trumans of Kentucky, that Nancy Tyler Holmes, the President's great-grandmother, was scalped by Indians. As the savage's blade cut around her hairline she lay absolutely motionless, knowing that the slightest movement indicating she was still alive would mean instant death. Thereafter she always wore a covering to hide her glabrous and scarred head.

In Jackson County Anderson Truman settled on a farm that lay in the vicinity of what is now Thirty-ninth and Indiana Streets, Kansas City; and John Anderson Truman, their son, and father of the President, was born there in 1851.

Grandfather Solomon Young set up an ox-team wagon freight from Westport Landing to Salt Lake City, and thence to San Francisco. The venture prospered and Grandfather Young saved sufficient money to purchase five thousand acres in Jackson County, seventeen miles South of Westport Landing. As his wagon freight business prospered Solomon Young kept investing in land, and at one time he owned



some Negro slaves and was a man of recognized means in west central Missouri. While he ran his wagon trains, often making the long, tortuous journey to Salt Lake City by himself and then out to San Francisco, Grandmother Harriet Young looked after the farms and kept affairs in order. In 1868 Grandfather Young purchased six hundred acres near Grandview in Jackson County. There was no better land in all the state, and the soil was unmarked by plough and unsapped by tillage and perennial crops. It cost thirty dollars an acre. Earlier in 1854 he had also acquired a ranch in the vicinity of Sacramento, California, but the family never lived there.

While Grandfather Young was amassing considerable means, the Trumans were meeting with more modest success. Grandfather Anderson Truman sold the farm in what is now Kansas City, and moved with his family to Platte County, Missouri, farmed there for a few years, and then returned to Jackson County and bought another farm of a hundred and sixty acres east of Holmes Park Village and only three miles from Solomon Young's farm at Grandview.

It was in these Western Missouri hills near the Kansas border that the Truman family and the Youngs, fiercely Democratic and staunch Confederates, lived through the war between the states, and it is an ignorant man indeed from this countryside who cannot recount almost endlessly the misadventures of the Civil War. They recall Quantrill's Guerrillas and Jim Lane, who carried fire and pistol along the Kansas-Missouri border.

Red-headed Grandmother Harriet Young, whom Harry Truman always recalls as "a grand old lady with the most beautiful hair I have ever seen," was also a woman who "stood for no foolishness." She gave alms freely, bore nine children, of whom seven lived to maturity, cared for numerous slave children and neighbours' orphans, and in her spare time brought up two nephews. As a young housewife she had experienced directly the horrors of guerrilla warfare.

Early one grey morning in 1861 while Grandfather Young

was away in California, Jim Lane, the ruthless leader of the Union-sympathizing Kansas "Red Legs," rode into the yard at the farmhouse and ordered Harriet Young to make biscuits for his motley crew of raiders. She began mixing dough, stoked up the kitchen stove, quieted the children, and then began baking. She baked biscuits until her fingers blistered, while outside shots rang out and the hogs in the pens squealed as the marauders invaded the barnyard. After a hearty breakfast the Lane raiders hacked hams from the four hundred hogs they had butchered, slung them across their saddles, set the barns on fire, and then rode away. After sacking the Youngs' farmstead Lane and his men raided Osceola, on the Osage River, pillaging and looting the town and killing some twenty inhabitants.

In reprisal for such raids as these, bands of Missouri robbers would ride into Kansas. Each side committed outrages against the other which involved the murder of many innocent people. The climax of this internecine warfare came in the summer of 1863, when Quantrill staged his famous raid on Lawrence, Kansas. Leading a band of nearly five hundred men, he rode into the town at daybreak with the intention of burning every house and killing every man. They rode through the streets, robbing and burning and shooting every man at sight, nearly two hundred in all.

The wanton attack on Lawrence was followed by the drastic Order Number 11 issued by the Union General Thomas Ewing. Almost all residents in Jackson, Cass, and Bates Counties in Missouri were ordered to leave their homes. They had to move out of the counties or to military posts. Grain and hay had to be yielded up to the military authorities.

The war years of 1861-65 inflicted grievous wounds upon Missouri, because the state was divided. She was both slave and free, though virtually surrounded on three sides by states fighting for the Union cause.

Missouri sent 109,111 men into the Union armies and another 30,000 wore the grey uniform of the Confederates—

including William Young, an uncle of Harry Truman who served as a foot soldier in General Sterling Price's army. Truman's father was too young to serve. No other member of the immediate family joined the colours, but they were Confederate Democrats by conviction, believing that they had enlisted in the cause of patriotism and independence and were fighting for the sacred right of self-determination.

There were few large plantation owners in Missouri, although 115,000 slaves were owned in the state in 1860. The Confederate sympathizers were determined to preserve their agrarian economy and the institutions surrounding it, though most Confederates did not themselves own slaves. The whole weight of military might, economic strength, and geographical position in Missouri favoured the North. The Federal Government had more and better trained soldiers, who were able to prevent Confederate armies in the North and South of Missouri from joining. Moreover, Northern leaders were more resourceful and far-sighted. And most of all, the Federal Government possessed vastly greater resources of wealth and industry.

Missouri did not witness great battles during the Civil War, but the fighting was bitter and tragic. Families were torn apart as sons and brothers joined opposing armies. Friendly neighbours became sworn enemies—it was a cruel, ugly struggle of burning, pillaging, murder, injustice, bush-whacking, and guerrilla engagements.

In spite of its superiority, the Union side never gained complete control of the state. General Price's men raided deep into the Union lines, alarming and hounding the Federal troops. There were bloody clashes at Booneville and at Wilson's Creek, near Lamar, where Harry Truman was born, and along the Blue and Big Blue Rivers, where, many years later, he was to play as a boy. Stiff fighting was also seen at Westport Landing, where Grandfather Young harnessed his wagon trains.

The Civil War left deep stains in the state. For months



It was in this little Lamar (Missouri) house, with a shingle roof and white clapboards, that Harry S. Truman, thirty-second President of the United States, was born on May 8, 1884. At the time of his birth the house was unnumbered and the street it was in had no name. Truman's father had built it two years before. Near by were the barns where the family mule- and horse-trading business was conducted.

*By courtesy of "Life"*



On their wedding-day in 1882 John Truman and his wife Martha posed for this old-fashioned photograph. Two years later, when their first child, Harry S., was born in Lamat, the President's father was so elated that he nailed a mulc-shoe over the door to bring his son good luck.

*Photo "European"*

## THE FAMILY

after hostilities had ceased bandits and guerrilla bands continued their depredations, and peace was slow in coming. It was hard to reform after years of lawlessness. Bandits like Jesse James and his brother Frank, who had served under Quantrell during the war, carried on their plunder and robbing to give Missouri the reputation of the 'bandit state' for decades to come.

But the riches and abundance of the opened frontier in the West had closed up the wounds of war by the time Harry Truman was born, twenty years later.

John Truman and Martha Ellen Young were sweethearts from their youth, and grew up together on their families' neighbouring farms at Grandview and Holmes Park Village. When the couple were married they moved to Lamar, where John established a fairly successful business in buying horses and mules. They lived in a low white frame house, the President's birthplace, which still stands. The Truman's mule and horse-barn was a sort of gathering place for farm folk who wanted to gossip, talk Democratic politics, or arrange a horse trade, for John Truman was always ready to 'swing a deal.' He bought and sold dozens of animals every week and was, as his sons recall, "the kind of a man who never passed a cow but what he stopped and tried to buy her." It was not a flourishing business, but one that sometimes turned a handsome profit, produced a fair living by Missouri standards, but not a great deal more. Missourians are by nature sharp traders, unsentimental and proud of giving the other fellow a 'skinning.' John Truman learned this the practical way; but since he was also a farmer who had known nothing but horses, mules, and cows, he managed to do his fair share of the 'skinning' and remain solvent.

St Louis, Missouri, then as now, was the horse and mule market of the entire country, and the animals John Truman bought and did not resell to local farmers he peddled to the buyers who came from the city.

Only Harry S. was born to the Trumans at Lamar. A

second boy, John Vivian, was born on April 25, 1886, on a farm at Harrisonville, Missouri. The third child, Mary Jane, was born to the family on August 12, 1889, at Grandview.

Longevity is quite usual in the family, though there have been some early deaths. Anderson Shippe Truman, the grandfather, lived to be seventy-one; his wife Mary Jane, after whom the President's daughter, Mary Margaret Truman, was named, died at fifty-seven. Grandfather Young passed away in his seventies, and Grandmother Young lived to be ninety-one. Harry Truman's only living aunt, Mrs Joseph Tilford Noland, of Independence, Missouri, celebrated her ninety-sixth birthday on May 6, 1945. Truman's father died at sixty-four. His mother is an indomitable, surprisingly vigorous woman of ninety-three.

When Harry Truman was about four years old the Trumans moved into the white rambling, eight-room, two-storey farmhouse of Grandfather Solomon Young at Grandview. There were two big hay and stock barns, a giant-sized granary, and half a dozen hog-sheds, all painted white like the house. It was a thriving establishment, watered profusely by clear, cool springs that bubbled up from the soil. There was an outdoor privy, some good Shorthorn and Hereford cattle, normally a couple of hundred head of hogs, and endless hard work. This farm may properly be said to be the beginning of Harry Truman's life. He remembers it intimately with a strong feeling of nostalgia, and he lived here until he was almost seven.

It was on the Youngs' farm that he tagged along after his mother, then a woman in her middle thirties, while she gathered the eggs from under the clucking, protesting hens. He followed her as she picked strawberries, canned tomatoes, and performed all the endless farming chores.

He loved to carry the egg basket for his mother, to walk along with her as she gathered vegetables from the big garden, and to prod his toes into the black coolly rich soil, to kick aside the weeds that withered almost instantly in the

## THE FAMILY

hot sun. He wore overalls, munched home-made sugar cakes, and liked to pull up the red radishes moist with earth; shine them on his overalls, and bite into them so that his tongue would sting.

He was like the people around him, undisturbed by matters of great pith and moment. He rambled through the yard seeking out birds' nests in the elm and box elder trees, finding a baby cottontail rabbit, watching the farm livestock, and admiring the sleek, butter-fat little pigs that squealed and scampered about the farm.

His mother, like Grandmother Young, was a strict disciplinarian and kept near at hand a slim switch or a slipper with which to correct her children. Harry Truman often said later, "We were taught that punishment always followed transgression, and my mother saw to it that it did." John Truman did not punish the children that way. He scolded them, but "that hurt worse than a good spanking."



## CHAPTER TWO

### *The Boy*

IT was the year 1891 when the Truman family moved on to Independence, Missouri, a larger town, where the father could better conduct his business of buying and selling animals. The family lived here in a square frame house at the corner of Waldo Street and River Boulevard.

By this time the first mouldings of the character and the qualities of Harry Truman had begun. He was not a light-hearted child, nor was he given to pranks or mischief. He had started to read the Bible, not as most children read the Bible, for its stories, but for as much as a boy's mind could catch of its deeper meaning, its moral lessons and great truths. It instilled in him a seriousness that became marked in a boy so young. He could quote many verses at random, and in a childlike way he knew their beauty and could understand the allegorical significance. By the time he was ten he had read almost twice through the Bible. His eyes in the meantime had begun to develop a decided feebleness, due no doubt in part to his intensive reading habits as well as to a tendency towards optical difficulty.

At the age of eight, because of his weakened eyes, he began to wear the thick-lensed glasses he still requires. His parents delayed for two years his entrance into school, and he was nearly nine when he entered the grade school in Independence. But, once enrolled, his lessons became an absorbing interest with him, particularly history, and most of all Civil War history, with mathematics and Latin as

secondary subjects. In general he was a fine student, a fact to which his instructors still bear witness. Within eight years, despite his late start, he had completed the course at the Independence High School.

Ethel Noland, his cousin, attests to his studious nature. "Harry was a model boy, the favourite of all the relatives. But that didn't make other boys hate him," she says. "He studied hard, and his grade card, although I was a year ahead of him, used to make me ashamed of myself.

"He sometimes got into small mischief, and sometimes he quarrelled with Vivian, and then mother Truman would switch them and make them behave. But everybody liked Harry, and he was so kind and friendly they just couldn't help it."

The sports and games which intrigue most boys of school age were lost on Harry Truman. He was frail physically, and his poor eyesight was a handicap in baseball, shinny—a rustic approximation of hockey—or other games. On afternoons he could be found not on the baseball fields but at the Independence public library, studying his lessons or reaching for books on the shelves.

By the time he was twelve he had read a great many of the books in the local library, which stocked some four thousand volumes including the encyclopædias. As he has often said, "I had more useless information floating around in my head than any man." He had a retentive, acute memory, and the facts that he kept culling from biographies and history books had a habit of sticking with him.

In some respects he could not be said to have been a normal boy's life. He never had a bicycle or many toys. He could not compete in sports because of his eyes. Moreover, his temperament was deeply studious and serious.

Unlike many other boys in rural Missouri, Harry Truman never wore overalls or dungarees to school. His mother always dressed him well, and insisted that he should wear a tie and clean shirt. On Sunday he put on a neat dark suit

Truman a beacon light, a warning, and a guide : "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." (Luke vi, 26.)

These precepts have been guiding principles in Truman's life. He learned the verses as a boy, and they have been, throughout his career, truths to which he could anchor himself and comforts to which he could repair in moments of difficulty and trouble. He also likes to quote from the twentieth chapter of Exodus, wherein Moses speaks of great moral precepts, and he reads often the Sermon on the Mount as recited in Matthew, chapters five, six, and seven.

The Spanish-American War in 1898, when Truman was barely fourteen, fired the youth with an ambition to be a soldier. He and a group of his school classmates, who included Charles G. Ross, former correspondent of the *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, who is now the White House press secretary, held weekly drills with .22-calibre rifles. They were getting ready, but the war ended before they were old enough to serve or to know the real meaning of military training.

The drills frequently ended with fishing excursions on the Little Blue or Missouri Rivers. Occasionally they tramped the woods, shot a neighbour's chicken, and roasted it in the protective covert of some grove. On the fishing trips, young Harry Truman seldom wet a hook or baited a worm. Instead he took with him a history or biography, lounged on the bank, and read, offering advice or reading favourite paragraphs, often to the disgust of his carefree companions.

While he was at high school Truman decided it was time to be earning his own money. He walked over to the drug-store at the north-east corner of the Independence square and asked Jim Clinton for a part-time job for mornings and afternoons, and was taken on. Clinton, now dead many years, was a business man who was all business, and for the three dollars a week which he paid out he intended and

was determined to get full value and a considerable volume of work. Truman was to handle the soda fountain; was to open the store at 6.30 every morning, sweep the floor, polish up the jugs and bottles, and in his spare moments when not waiting at the counter, to wash and dry what looked like millions of bottles littering the cramped space behind the prescription counter. Truman worked a year at this part-time job, and he learned that money is hard to earn and must not be wasted.

One day Jim Clinton directed him to dust the entire stock of bottles. The boy took one look at the long rows of glass on the shelves and decided he had had enough of this at three dollars a week. He yearned for a better job, and for several months he had thought of working for the *Kansas City Star*, an arch-Republican newspaper that circulated throughout Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma. Here was opportunity, and Harry Truman grabbed at it.

He decided to leave Jim Clinton, drew his three dollars for the last week's work, and then took his first and only venture into journalism.

The *Star* needed good boys, but not for editors or reporters. It needed boys to handle the papers that flowed in a seemingly torrential avalanche from its grinding presses, and this was Harry Truman's job at seven dollars a week—more than double his former pay. He was concerned with papers for six months, until he dreamed newspapers, was haunted by newspapers, and could see only the words *Kansas City Star* when he went to bed at night.

In 1901, when seventeen-year-old Harry Truman had graduated from the Independence High School, father John Truman met financial reverses which swept away their home at Waldo Street and River Boulevard. It was clear that there would be no more money for education; there was barely enough left to purchase a house at 2108 Park Avenue, Kansas City, a less pretentious dwelling. It was necessary that the boys should go to work.

It was in May of that same year, 1901, that Truman was given an appointment to West Point by Democratic Congressman William S. Cowherd. He was elated with this opportunity and readily imagined for himself a promising career in the Regular Army. He studied hard that summer in preparation for his entrance examinations. And in the fall he passed all the West Point tests—save one. When the doctors examined his eyes they found them to be weak and overstrained. He was rejected for this reason. It was one of the bitterest disappointments of his life.

Sadly Truman went to the L. J. Smith Construction Company, which was then building a track for the Santa Fé Railroad from Sheffield to Sibley, Missouri. He applied and got a job as timekeeper for the rough and crude construction gangs at thirty-five dollars a month "and board." The foreman, Ed Smith, a brother of L. J., was a martinet who bossed three crews in as many camps. Most of the men were hoboes picked up in Kansas City or along the railway, and some of them were common drunks. Harry Truman twice daily pushed a three-wheel hand-trolley between the camps to check the gangs and to make out their time tickets. The gangs were paid twice monthly, and every other Saturday the slim, bespectacled boy sat in the back room of a saloon in Independence or Sheffield, Missouri, and there made out and signed the pay cheques which were carried, in most cases, straight round the partition to the bar and spent there in fifteen-cent whisky.

He lived in the tents that housed the gangs, ate the hash that was served up in tin pails by company cooks, and, in his own words, learned "all the cusswords in the English language—not by ear but by note." It was a coarse and hard life, bitterly frank, deeply profane, and ruggedly realistic. Six months of it were enough. Harry Truman was tired of seeing shiftless, uncouth men work for two weeks, draw their pay, and spend it in devastating drunkenness, then go back to work for more money, only to repeat their drinking

bouts on the next pay-day. Truman took a weekend off and went to Kansas City. He was then eighteen years old and wondering just what future a youth of such limited means, with what he felt was such limited intelligence and such circumscribed opportunity, might ever enjoy.

He had lived with the railway gangs, swapped towering and earthy oaths with them, roughed his hands on pick and shovel, and kept his time records with meticulous care. But this was no life for Harry Truman.

Brother Vivian had taken a position as a clerk at the National Bank of Commerce in Kansas City, and early that Monday morning Harry Truman, a callow and somewhat abashed youth, walked into the bank and asked for a job. He didn't much expect to get it. But he knew that he could keep books after a fashion and that he could add and subtract. He convinced the bank's officials that he could do the work and was engaged to keep and post ledgers at exactly his Santa Fé salary of thirty-five dollars a month. 'Board' was not included, but he lived at home.

Bank work was not easy. The clerks worked in a basement. The vice-president, Charles H. Moore, was the official disciplinarian, and, as Truman recalled many years later, "he was an artist at it." It seemed that the bank officials "would always remember a trivial mistake when a clerk asked for a raise" and find this sufficient reason for denying it, for "raises were hard to get and if a man got an additional five dollars a month he was a go-getter."

A year later Truman moved over to the Union National Bank of Kansas City as a book-keeper at 60 dollars a month and soon was earning 125 dollars a month, which admittedly was "a heck of a high salary." Harry Truman was going places. He stayed at this job for three years, until he was twenty-two, and saved his money. When in 1904 father Truman traded the home on Park Avenue for an equity in eighty acres of land near Clinton and went there to farm Harry moved to a boarding-house at 1314 Troost Avenue,

and lived with a family named Trow. He lived on a budget, and often his lunches comprised a ten-cent pocket packet purchased at a street coffee stall.

Frequently he spent Sunday at the Wallaces' home in Independence to see Bess, or else he went down to Grandview to visit Grandmother Harriet Young and bachelor Uncle Harrison Young on the big farm.

One day Harrison Young told his nephew that he wanted to move into town and take life easy. He outlined a plan for John and Martha Truman, Harry, and Vivian, to return to the Young farm, which they had left fifteen years before; letting the little acreage John Truman had acquired near Clinton. Harry took the proposition to his father, who thought it was a good idea, if Harry and Vivian could help. They agreed, and in 1906 the Trumans moved back to the farm Harry as a boy had loved so well.

He was twenty-two, back in overalls, and happy, and as convinced as only a youth can be that here he would spend the rest of his life. This was what he wanted.

## CHAPTER THREE

### *The Farmer*

HARRY TRUMAN was a good bank clerk. He kept his records neat, and he was honest and careful. But he was a better farmer. When he left the Union National Bank and returned to the farm with his father and mother, Mary Jane and Vivian, and Grandmother Young, there followed ten of the happiest years of his life. He was twenty-two and at the very age when youths are most likely to sense the glamour and excitement of Nature's truths. The decade was saddened only by the death of his father, John Truman, in 1915.

Truman has often said of those years on the farm, "I wish I had kept a diary." He and his father managed the farm together and worked together. Truman acquired then the habit of early rising—4.30 A.M. in the summers and 6.30 A.M. in the winters—long before the sun had climbed clear and warm over the Missouri prairie or pierced through the snowy haze of January. This habit of early rising is still with him. It will never leave him. And in his office as President of the United States it will afford opportunity for study in the quiet of morning when faculties are refreshed and the mind and body invigorated by the sound, undisturbed sleep into which he slides easily and instantly upon touching the pillow.

On the farm his was the job that raised sweat—salt sweat—and sent him in from the fields at sunset with his overalls grimed and caked with dust and grease and dirt. He learned



"to plough as straight a furrow as could be found in all Missouri."

He liked to ride along on the Emerson gang plough, holding the levers with his hardened hands, while the earth curled in a black sweetly fresh ribbon at the side of the shining steel mould-board. He learned to pull a neat left turn with the plough at the end of a furrow and bring the horses sharply round to start off at a right angle from the furrow he had just completed.

"Riding one of these ploughs all day, day after day," Truman often remarked later, "gives one time to think. I've settled all of the ills of mankind in one way or another riding along, seeing that each animal pulled his part of the load."

As on all Missouri farms, the hot sun shone in a coppered glare needed for ample growth of the corn and early ripening of the billowing acres of long-stem wheat. There were the breakfasts of eggs, ham, and biscuits and jelly; the dinners lush and rich from the garden, and the smell of corn-bread baking in the oven; the suppers of steak or fried chicken. There stood the fattening cow rich with the pregnancy of life. Crows signalled nightfall as they flew in westerly procession to some roosting grove, rasping out their last few harsh cries of the day. The chirp of the prairie sparrow was dry and parched in blistering hot weather. There was also the harvest of fall and the rough grating of shucking peg on dry husk and kernel.

Here was something deeper, something genuine and more fundamental than rows of figures between the red-ruled lines of a ledger page; something that reached out and gripped the heart. It was not like the debits and credits of notes or cheques. This was life.

A pleasant discord sounded in the shrill grating of the old iron pump which lifted from the deep well a water that never flowed through waterworks or chlorinating systems, and was not obtained by turning a tap. It tasted clean and half-frozen,

## THE FARMER

and was pumped, on hot workdays, into the old stone jug wrapped in a burlap sack which itself was wet and in the sun gave up its moisture in an evaporative process that made the jug, indeed, a cooler—keeping the contents cold and fresh until late afternoon. Placed in the shade of a Jimson weed or a gooseberry bush, the jug would be cool until evening, and refreshing throughout the long afternoons.

There were even musical notes in the sharp blows of claw-hammer on staple, the pull of barbed and woven wire as Harry Truman stretched and stapled his fences to hold the hogs and cattle within the pastures of the farm. There was a pleasure in hewing out with pocket-knife and drawing-knife the round wooden pegs called 'cultivator pins,' which kept the cultivator shovels in place, but conveniently broke and released the shovel when it struck a rock or stump. The best pegs, Truman learned, were made from hedge, that steely tough wood sometimes called *bois d'arc*. He used to smash up a common brickbat and with its sandy dust polish up the ploughshares and shovels so that the soil would not cling to them. And he liked to see the metal take on a mirror polish and smoothness as the season's ploughing advanced.

There were the warm, rainy nights when the weather was ideally suited to the pigging sows, and on these nights Harry Truman kept vigil. He would gather up the fresh brood in a bushel basket or tin wash-tub lined with straw, while with his free hand he swung a club to ward off the enraged sow as he carried the new-born pigs to the haven and safety of the hog-sheds. He still bears to this day the marks made by enraged and unreasoning sows which charged through his protective flail to rip his overalls and legs with their champing jaws. No one who has not 'carried pigs to the barn' can imagine the hazard of the task.

He learned to bang the No. 12 scoop against the corn-crib door and yell "Whoo-e-e" to call the hogs from a quarter of a mile away, and to bellow "So-o boss" until the cows over the hill came galloping awkwardly to the barn, spilling

droplets of milk from strained and distended udders. He learned to milk a cow in a matter of minutes, and listened for the first streams of milk to rattle into the tin pail, then watch the golden-white fluid climb up in a heavy foam that would perch an inch or more above the pail.

Of evenings and in early morning he took his three-legged rustic stool and sat down to milk both for the family table and for the pig trough in a pen adjoining the barn. He learned early that the job of bucket-feeding a weaning calf was both precarious and aggravating. It seemed that the calf before galloping away inevitably blew the last mouthful of foamy milk out through its nostrils upon the feeder, or butted the bucket with its last quarts of milk into the holder's arms.

In summer-time he would be patient when the flies were biting. They would spread over the cows in a cloud of black, as the animals switched viciously and slapped the milker with tails caked with mud or manure. He enjoyed as much as any farm youth to milk a stream into the mouth of a near-by cat and watch the animal lick its chops in surprised satisfaction and then start following up the sudden stream of nourishment to its source.

Truman loved this work. He could smell the lush alfalfa and clover that fell in orderly, six-foot swaths over the sickle of his mower, the cool sweetness of the hay after it had been raked and dried and was ready for the barn. He wore his straw hat in summer and his felt in winter. Both were battered, sometimes torn, and always greasy. His work gloves softened only a little the callouses that were rough and thick in his palms. In the rolled cuffs of his overalls he gathered a daily load of black dirt, hayseed, straw, machine-shop shavings, and grains, that had to be got rid of each night before entering the house.

Late in June thunder showers would come up suddenly in a towering frown of black cloud, generally from the southwest, with blinding flashes of lightning and earsplitting volleys

of thunder followed quickly by the cool, pelting dash of rain that rattled on the roof, flooded the barn lots, and soaked deep into the ground round the tap and brace roots of the corn. He learned that wind in the east or south-east meant rain, but that when the wind was from the west or south-west it was safe to mow the hay.

As he ploughed he idly picked out the caricatures painted by the hot-weather cumulus clouds in heavenly billows of white along the horizon, piling up in giant stacks and often loosing white-hot ropes of lightning. He laboured in the fields, and while he was resting he would heat the iron wagon tyres and shrink them to the wooden wheels with geometric precision.

He learned the surgical art of castrating pigs, and became such an expert at it that neighbours joked that "when Harry sharpens his knife the pigs run out to pasture." One afternoon, as he drove the horses from the barn lot, a two-year-old whirled and kicked viciously as it ran through the gate. The hoof landed a glancing blow on Truman's left leg, below the knee. As soon as he could get back on his feet he hobbled about his work. That evening, when he started to separate a calf from a cow it had sucked, he grabbed the calf around the neck to wrestle it away, and threw his weight heavily on his left foot. The bone which had been cracked by the colt's kick earlier in the afternoon snapped, and he collapsed. It was a clean fracture about four inches below the knee, and it was weeks before he could work again. But his leg healed completely and he walks without a limp.

He liked to feel the snap of the traces as he hooked the horses into the swingle-trees, and he learned the art of juggling the two handles bolted to the beams of a cultivator, manipulating the shovels as he walked along so that a long mound of rich earth was thrown up round the young corn to protect and anchor the prop roots and at the same time cover up the persistent weeds.

There were long Saturday evenings at Grandview and

Belton stores, with talks of local politics—Democratic politics—crops and weather; the thrifty, frugal-living farmers shopped for foods which the farm did not produce, and for dungarees, husking mittens for winter wear, and leather gloves for summer. The family traded mostly at Belton, for that town had a general store and a bank. Grandview had neither.

Winters were cold and bleak, with heavy snows that in the below-zero temperatures turned crisp and squeaked and squealed beneath the iron-shod wheels of wagon or buggy. Elm trees contracting in the cold would snap and crack like revolver shots. In such weather there was hay to be hauled from the stack to the cattle and the early morning job of pulling comb and brush through the crackling, shaggy hair of the horses and mules.

At week-ends farmer Harry Truman boarded the train and rode twenty miles up to Independence to court Bess Wallace. Her family was one of considerable affluence, her grandfather, George Porterfield Gates, being a fairly well-to-do man, owning most of the Waggoner-Gates milling business which still operates in Independence. Grandfather Gates died in June 1918, while Truman was in France, but Grandmother Margaret Gates and the Wallaces continued to live in their big, rambling, sixteen-room frame house at 219 North Delaware Street, in those days a dwelling that aroused the admiration of neighbours all around. It has now, as it had then, plain furnishings, a large farm-house kitchen, and a big yard studded with shady trees. Dave Wallace, Bess's father, was a lawyer of established ability in Independence, and the Gateses and Wallaces were among the recognized families of the community.

Harry Truman and Bess Wallace frequently attended church together, even though Truman had joined the Baptist Church and she was an Episcopalian. They were at school together and had graduated from grade and high school in the same classes. Each thought the other was 'pretty nice.' Bess Wallace was the only girl Harry Truman ever loved, though



Harry Truman (*right*) at the age of four, with his brother, John Vivian, then two years old. Vivian, who was named after a Confederate cavalry officer, still works on the farm at Grandview.

*Photo Press Association, Inc.*



This formal portrait of the President at the age of thirteen reveals an eager, friendly countenance. His lessons were an absorbing interest, and at school he often acted as conciliator of classroom disputes. Although his weak eyes prevented him from competing in sports, he liked to play with his friends down by the Big Blue River.

*Photo "European."*

she had many rival suitors. Bess Wallace admittedly was a 'catch' for any young man, and there was no lack of social callers at the Wallace home.

In 1913 Truman bought a dark, four-cylinder Stafford motor-car, the thirteenth off the Stafford assembly floor in Kansas City, and then he began to call more often at the Wallace home. He and Bess Wallace sometimes attended church socials or 'box suppers,' those curious rural auctions that supplied money and raised jealousies in the name of local schools or charities. Neighbours noticed that Harry Truman always helped himself generously to the sandwiches, cake, and pie boxed by Bess Wallace, and with her proudly ate its contents. He liked her cooking even as much, they remarked, as she seemed to like his company.

Money on the farm was not plentiful, and what there was of it was literally scratched and raked from the soil. Not that the soil was unwilling or niggardly, but prices were mediocre, work was back-breaking, and Nature often ruined a carefully nurtured crop with hail, frost, or the searing sun. Harry Truman learned to study and respect the whims of Nature. He could forecast almost to the day when a cow would calve or a mare would foal.

It was a rare night when he did not complete his day's work with an hour or two of reading, for his education did not end with high school or his departure from Kansas City. He liked this life. He likes it yet, and is perfectly at home talking cattle, discussing corn crops, or debating the merits of Poland China versus Duroc Jersey on a Missouri farm. These were lean, hard years, but in experience, in the formation of character, and the fruition of understanding and true humility—which is the seed of all greatness—they were rich years. Truman not only learned to love the farm and its animals and its labours, but he loved to learn from it.

He learned to trim a horse's hooves with his pocket-knife and to file a deep groove at right angles to the crack in a hoof to prevent laming the animal. He discovered the way



to hitch a young colt with a heavier, gentler animal and thus break it to the mysteries and the slaveries of collar, hame, and traces. He learned how to treat a cow for clover disease by thrusting deeply into the animal's abdomen with a long-bladed pocket-knife, four ribs up from the rump, and there piercing the agonized, gas-inflated stomach which, properly lanced, healed almost miraculously.

He could compute accurately the number of bushels of corn in a crib by measuring its cubic contents, and figure the tons of hay in a rick by the same method. *The Daily Drovers' Telegram*, a market newspaper of large circulation, was read almost as religiously as the Bible and Plutarch's *Lives*, for on the farm the hog and cattle market and the horse and mule trade were important and vital matters of everyday living. He read the *Kansas City Star* and studied politics, and once, in 1912, when the Democratic Convention was meeting at Baltimore and trying to choose between Champ Clark and Woodrow Wilson, he tied his team to the fence, streaked to a telegraph office and asked if the operator of that mysterious system had any knowledge of the man chosen as the Presidential nominee.

Truman studied the 'horse doctor book,' which is a part of every farm library, and was his own veterinary surgeon, his own farm-hand, his own book-keeper and manager. He swung a scythe and dug the weeds round the fence-palings, nailed shingles on the barn, cleared the privy, and performed all of the myriad chores that make farming an art as well as one of the most difficult occupations in the world.

Truman worked out how to measure the acreage he had ploughed by counting the revolutions of the cultivator wheel along the length of one row, multiplying this figure by the number of rows ploughed, and calculating the area thus covered. After all, unless something like this were done to occupy one's mind cultivating corn was a dull job. He and his father bought a new manure-spreader, brought manure from the farm barns and from adjoining towns to spread

upon the fields, and followed a strict plan of crop rotation : from clover to corn, from corn to oats, from oats to wheat, and from wheat back to clover. The land improved in quality. Production of wheat increased from thirteen to nineteen bushels per acre. The field of corn increased from thirty-five to seventy bushels per acre. It was killing work, but it paid fairly well.

Occasionally after dusk, with the dishes washed and dried and the milk put in the cellar to cool, Harry Truman would sit at the piano and play the music of the masters, akin in many respects to the music of life all around him. His hands were hard and strong, and adept at the quick-motion tossing up that would splinter a hickory pitchfork-handle in an instant with an overload of hay, as he pitched the hay up to his father on the rick. But his fingers did not lose their touch for the keyboard. He played well, sometimes just to rest his tired and weary body.

In December 1909 he joined the Belton Masonic Lodge, and was made a junior warden. As he ploughed the fields he delivered to the teams he drove the Masonic lectures he had learned by rote. He helped to organize the Grandview Masonic Lodge, and was its first master. Later, in 1940, he was to be elected Grand Master of Missouri.

It was in early 1915 that his father first showed signs of the illness that was to bring on his death. This was a blow that shocked the entire family and took from Harry Truman one of his closest companions. The two had worked together in the fields, and while they pitched hay or ploughed the fields they had talked long and deeply over life, politics, and all the countryside gossip. In the early summer of that year father John Truman began to complain of pains in his stomach, and though he continued to do some work his face showed clearly that he suffered from a recurrent and painful misery. He finally went to bed, and on the doctor's advice was moved to a Kansas City hospital for an operation. The exact nature of the ailment was never precisely settled. The

operation was a serious one, but for a time thereafter it seemed that he was getting better, and he was taken home. But in October he suddenly grew much worse. In a few days he died, at the age of sixty-four. The family arranged his burial at the Forest Hills Cemetery in South Kansas City, and then went sadly back to the every-day routine of the farm.

Upon his father's death Truman was appointed to succeed him as road overseer in the southern half of Washington township, which job forced him to spend his spare time collecting taxes, fixing grades, and repairing culverts and bridges.

Truman's father had always taken an active part in local politics. For four years before his death he had been road overseer for Washington township, in which the Grandview farm was located. And from 1906 until he died he had served as judge for elections in the Grandview precinct, his son Harry usually acting as clerk, a job that early whetted his interest in the political contests that stirred up the county, city, and nation. Succeeding his father as road overseer was Harry Truman's first political post.

He gave up the job when he disagreed with the county commissioners. They did not believe that he should make so many improvements. Truman felt that he should. With the support of Congressman William P. Borland, a Democrat, Truman was then appointed postmaster at Grandview, a job with a salary of about fifty dollars a month. Truman engaged as his assistant Ella Hall, and let her run the office and take the money, which in those days was equal to paying two men for farm labour. She needed the money more than he did. Truman gave her the entire salary.

Business reverses and borrowings in the lean years of the 1920's and early 1930's were to force the family to sell a part of the Grandview farm in order to clear up mortgages and settle the tangled legal business of an estate. At one time Jackson County held a 30,000-dollar mortgage on part of

the farm, and subsequently sold the land, some of it back to the Trumans, for more than 40,000 dollars. To-day the six hundred acres have shrunk to 340 acres, owned jointly by the President, sister Mary Jane, and brother Vivian. Vivian is the manager-operator of the farm and also assistant director of the Kansas City office of the Federal Housing Administration. As in the early days, the Truman family still buys and sells horses, mules, and hogs.

In his days on the farm Harry Truman liked best the growing season—the summer, with its heat and its flourishing growth of crops and weeds. On those nights, when the air was slightly cool and he could hear the corn rustle in the soft brush of air, he sat on the front porch or on the fence and thought and wondered. He was not wondering about his future. The present was almost idyllic, despite its hardness. As he rubbed the callouses on his hands he was wondering, after nearly ten peaceful years on the farm, about war.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *The Soldier*

TRUMAN remembered the days of the Spanish-American War when, as a lad of fourteen, he and other boys had drilled with .22-calibre rifles and had talked of Dewey at Manila and General Shafter in Cuba.

In 1905, while he was a bank clerk, Truman went to Kansas City, joined the National Guard, and went religiously to his marching and drilling. On June 14—Flag Day—Captain George R. Collins organized a battery of light artillery. Truman became a charter member.

"After reading all the books I could obtain in the Independence and Kansas City public libraries on history and government from early Egypt to the United States of America," Truman said in explanation of this start of his military career, "I came to the conclusion that every citizen should know something about the military, finance or banking, and agriculture. All my heroes or great leaders were somewhat familiar with one or the other or all three."

By August of that year he had gone to his first encampment at Cape Girardeau, travelling by train to St Louis, and thence by steamboat down the Mississippi river to his destination. It was a great experience, and Truman liked the excitement and hard work of the camp. Thereafter for many years he regularly attended camps, and at Fort Riley, Kansas, was given a corporal's warrant. As a farmer he carried on his military training. He remembered visiting his Grandmother, Harriet Young, as a guardsman. The Young family

had not even then forgotten the infamous Order No. 11, of 1863, which required them to leave their farm for a military post. And they also remembered that the family home had been pillaged and robbed by Jim Lane and his Union-sympathizing guerrilla troops.

Truman recalls vividly how Grandmother Harriet fixed him with a stern and withering look as he strode into her sitting-room in his blue uniform. Her lips drew out into a white thin line and she spoke crisply :

"Harry! This is the first time a uniform of that colour has been in this house since the Civil War. Don't bring it back!"

When another famous Missourian, General John J. Pershing, of Laclde, was on the Mexican border in 1916 pursuing Pancho Villa Harry Truman remained at home to care for the farm, his mind hardly less intent upon the invasion of Mexico than upon the flight and pursuit of Villa. He was then a member of Battery B of the Missouri National Guard, and when the United States entered the first World War on April 6, 1917, Truman was made a first lieutenant.

In August he was sent for further training to Camp Doniphan near Fort Sill, Oklahoma, at the edge of the Wichita Mountains. It was here, in the 1880's, that the bloody old Apache chief, Geronimo, had been detained and imprisoned after his capture by United States Army regiments. The fort was the largest and by far the best training-ground for artillery, and Harry Truman liked it no less than the farm. But he was not a model soldier. He was criticized and reprimanded by his superiors for infractions of regulations that sprang more from lack of acquaintance with them than intent to commit breaches.

Truman was serving in Captain Pete Allen's Battery F, but because of his knowledge of accountancy and the banking practice, Colonel Karl D. Demm put Truman in charge of the regimental canteen, a business venture of some proportions. He did not attempt to handle the job alone, but instead he

called in a Jewish friend, Eddie Jacobson, and together the pair organized their canteen. They began by collecting a two-dollar investment from each of the eleven hundred men. Jacobson, a sergeant and former shirt salesman at Kansas City, was put in charge of the canteen. Truman acted as manager and policy-maker. Jacobson knew the rules of buying low and selling profitably, and within six months each man had received back his initial investment of two dollars and managers Truman and Jacobson declared fifteen thousand dollars in dividends on the original two thousand two hundred dollars investment.

Truman meanwhile was developing into one of the finest artillery officers in the camp. He had a flair for mathematics, and a faculty for calculating triangulation that surprised his instructors and elder officers. He did not attempt to explain it, but just said drily, "The job is to hit the target, lay them down on it, isn't it?" He seemed to calculate his ranges by a sort of rule-of-thumb process, but the shells landed on or near the targets. Truman learned most of his artillery technique from Lieutenant-Colonel Robert M. Danford, author and authority on field fire. Truman progressed with such promise that he was raised to a captaincy; then he was picked with thirty-nine other officers and three hundred men and sent to France with the 129th Field Artillery of the 35th Division, Missouri and Kansas National Guard, a body of men that was destined to see much fighting and to sustain heavy casualties in the Argonne. Truman landed from a transport—the steamer *George Washington*—at Brest, France, on April 13, 1918, twenty-seven years to the day before he was to serve his first day as President of the United States.

Truman's contingent was sent to artillery schools at Châtillon-sur-Seine and Coetquidon to learn the finer points of artillery fire from French line officers.

On July 11, 1918, Captain Truman was given command of Battery D, 129th Artillery—a rough collection of Kansas City Irishmen utterly devoid of regard for shoulder bars,

uninhibited in their treatment of officers, unafraid of war or the guardhouse, and proud of the five captains' scalps already hanging at their belts. Most of them were from DeLasalle High School, and a few had attended Rockhurst College in Kansas City.

"I won't forget that day," Truman often said later. "I was never so scared in my life. They had driven out five captains, and they were as tough a bunch of men as you will ever find. Each man was a fine soldier, but taken together the outfit was almost insufferable. They loved trouble. If they couldn't mix it with the Boche they were ready to mix it among themselves."

There were 188 men and 167 horses in Battery D. The men decided to initiate Truman into their midst with conduct bordering on rebellion. The horses were wild, unruly, and hard to manage; it was absurdly easy to stage a runaway, scattering equipment and impedimenta over the French countryside. On Truman's first day in command of the battery the men arranged for such a stampede, and the ensuing scramble was manufactured with realism and authenticity. The men had envisaged Captain Harry Truman riding frantically by the side of the runaway, attempting to bring order out of the riot. They were wrong. Harry Truman not only had seen runaways in Missouri on the farm, but he himself had fought to bring frightened, terrorized animals under control. He knew this one was staged from the minute it started.

Captain Truman sat on his horse and watched the scramble proceed from confusion to chaos. He grinned broadly. Then he turned and calmly rode off, after ordering the men to collect the equipment, patch the harnesses, and repair the wreckage. Swearing and sweating, the battery repaired the damage. They had judged wrongly. It was the last attempt they were to make to confuse and confound their school-teacherish, friendly, but stern commanding officer. Within two weeks the battery was able to loose four guns, ammunition



carriages, wagons, field kitchens, and huts, and be on the move in fourteen minutes, something of a record.

Captain Truman took over his command with prayer and a devout desire to do right and 'keep his hand on the throttle.' For a month he kept the guardhouse well populated, exhausted all the profanity he knew, and invented variations with the aptitude of an impresario. He learned that although his battery held a debonair agnosticism towards rank, they had real respect for a man who asked no quarter, expected no favours, and proved himself genuine and real. Truman slept in the mud with his battery, often without the protective shelter of a tent, while the rain streamed down his face. He tramped in mud to his knees, and when the guns were stuck in the mire he put his shoulder to the wheel and grunted and strained along with his men. He granted leaves whenever possible, and won many a dollar at poker and blackjack. When a Battery D man was given leave Truman seldom failed to call him in and inquire after his finances. If he needed money Truman would lend him two hundred and fifty francs, or more for an I O U.

Mixing a firm, unyielding discipline with kindly favours to his men, and sharing with them the sweat and slime of the battlefield, Captain Truman created in his battery a loyalty and spirit that was unbeatable. The Kansas City Irishmen learned quickly to like and to respect him. Here was an officer who made them carry out the orders, who gaoled them, who loaned them money, who drank cognac and vin rouge or vin blanc with them, but who never cringed before danger or remained idle while the others worked.

Lieutenant-Colonel Edward V. Condon, a National Guard officer who served in Battery D, once said that:

Every man in that battery would have gone through hell for Harry Truman. The night before the Meuse-Argonne offensive he gathered us round and had a little talk. It wasn't what you could call a speech, just a quiet talk like an older brother some-

times has with a younger boy. A few things that Harry Truman said that night still stick in my mind :

"I want to tell you this too, fellows. Right to-night I'm where I want to be—in command of this battery. I'd rather be right here than be President of the United States. You boys are my kind. Now let's go in!"

Generally before an offensive there had been such talks by Captain Truman, but this was the one which stayed in Colonel Condon's memory. The battery knew that it could carry out the Captain's orders, for it had been fighting for a great many months on end during that final year of the war.

It had first gone into action on August 18, 1918, in the Vosges Mountains sector, a rather quiet place, where the fighting consisted mostly of lobbing an occasional round of 75-millimetre shells some three miles over into the German lines. From August 18 to September 3 the battery remained in this salient. Then, late one night, orders came to move at once into the Saint-Mihiel sector. The big offensive then being mounted was almost at hand. All around troops were being quietly entrained under cover of darkness for movement to the new front; artillery batteries were disappearing over night, and the mammoth Western Front war of manœuvre was under way.

Since artillery was not mechanized in those days, Truman's Battery D consisted of four 75-millimetre guns with six horses for each gun, besides ammunition carts. Hurriedly the battery began rooting up the dug-in gun limbers and harnessing the animals, and within an hour were chugging off on a French railway train. It was on this trip that Truman met Colonel Bennett Champ Clark, who was later to serve with him in the Senate of the United States.

At a small siding the train stopped, and Captain Truman walked into the little hut by the tracks. Clark was there with an armload of orders and maps. "Get off that train and get out of here," he shouted at Truman. "The enemy has been blasting this place : here are your orders and maps."

Truman took one look outside at a couple of dead horses by the train, and in twenty minutes his battery had the guns unloaded and horses ready, and was rattling off up the road, while, behind, Bennett Clark laughed uproariously. It had been at least two days since a German shell had landed anywhere in the vicinity.

It was on September 6, in the Vosges Mountains, that Truman and his battery fought what he was later to call "The Battle of Who Run." The battery was in position, and Brigadier-General Lucian G. Berry ordered a chlorine gas barrage. The order was for five hundred rounds to be pumped into a village position in the German lines, preceding an infantry bayonet attack. It was a dark night, and the rain poured down in torrents. Truman's battery began lobbing the gas shells into the village. Suddenly half-a-dozen German Howitzer shells crashed into and around the battery, killing six horses instantly.

"Run, boys! By God, they've got a bracket on us!" an unnamed sergeant screamed in panic as he took to his heels. The other men of Battery D bolted.

Standing in the midst of his battery, Truman yelled in a shout that rose above the crash of battle: "Hey! Get back here! Help me hook up these horses and get this battery out of here!" There were more shells coming over, but the men took one backward glance at Truman and returned, and with shaking, hurried hands hooked in the traces and helped haul the battery back and some three hundred yards to the right to safety. The stubborn Kansas City Irishmen were not going to let this fellow with the quiet courage outdo them.

The battery moved into position for the Saint-Mihiel offensive on the night of September 12, and at four o'clock in the morning it began firing. It was up close to the lines, and behind were the larger guns; still farther back were the immense railway guns that hurled gigantic shells into the enemy positions. The firing continued for an hour, and then at the zero hour near dawn, when the infantry went

over the top, the battery elevated its sights and began firing on roads and villages farther behind the German line. For the next four days Captain Truman and his battery went unshaven and sleepless, with life a wearying, unbroken job of hitching up the guns, moving forward, unhitching, digging them in, firing several hundred rounds on machine-gun nests or villages, hitching up, and moving again.

Mile after mile of advance unwound itself, and the battery grew to hate the Kaiser, the German General Staff, and the enemy soldiers, at every step and each pull of the lanyard.

This was the push that started the Germans reeling back to defeat. But they did not take it meekly. Their guns fired back. The wounded were coming back in streams, and dead littered the roadways of the advance. The batteries on either side of Battery D were badly shot up, but somehow, miraculously, Battery D escaped. On the night of September 16 the battery was pulled out of the Saint-Mihiel salient, loaded on to another train, and shipped into the Meuse-Argonne sector. It rested for a week, then moved up into position. It was on the night of September 25 that Truman delivered the homely talk that was to stay with Colonel Condon. The great offensive was ready for the jump-off.

The night was fairly calm. The enemy, nervous but not prepared for the impending offensive, threw over only a few shells. An occasional rifle-crack sounded dimly. And then, past midnight, the guns began to open up. It started like a Missouri hail-storm on a tin roof; a gun at the left crashed through a round, then a salvo on the right, then two at once, a lull, then three, and finally a rising crescendo that became a roaring drumfire of flash and thunder.

Harry Truman stood directly behind his battery with a stop-watch. The field maps were spread out on boxes of ammunition containing enough high explosive to kill off the entire battery if a shell came crashing in. The four guns opened up almost simultaneously. The artillerymen worked frantically, jamming shells home, yanking lanyards, tossing

away the debris that seemed to pile up around each gun limber.

As his music teacher had done for him years before, Captain Truman counted off the time by his stop-watch with metronomic regularity, for each gun to fire—"One—two—three—four. One—two—three—four." His voice, never strong, and always unaccustomed to extended use, grew ragged and hoarse. The barrels of the French 75's began to glow like fireflies in the early morning greyness, then changed to a coppery colour before turning fiery red. Four cans of drinking-water stood near by, and Truman ordered the men to toss their woollen blankets into the water, then drape them over the gun-barrels. He pulled one gun from the battery and kept the other three firing with musical regularity and precision while the one was wrapped in the soaked blankets. Every ten minutes he pulled out another gun and substituted the one which had cooled off. That way each gun cooled ten minutes out of every thirty. It was necessary to speed up the three pieces' firing to keep up the rate that had been set for four, and each of the three active guns kept firing six shots per minute of high explosive.

The blankets smoked and burned, and new ones were tossed into the water and draped over the hot barrels. By eight o'clock on the morning of September 26 Captain Truman's battery had fired three thousand rounds—a frenzied rate of cannonading. The bloody torrent of fire and steel ripped up the German front-line trenches, hurling human bodies and broken bones over thousands of yards. Truman's explanation of the precision of his battery—which became something of a wonder in the 35th—was simple: "I was told where I had to fire and I had to fire there, or, by God, it was my neck if I didn't."

All through that day he played eloquently upon the four guns under his command. From Saturday morning until Tuesday night his battery and himself fired, advanced, re-set; fired, advanced, reset, and fired. In all of this time

neither Truman nor his men had a wink of sleep. Men from other adjoining batteries wandered over to pick up the fine points of precision-firing from Battery D—this muddy, unshaven crew that sweated and swore and worked like demons and seemed always to lay their cannon right on the targets.

It was in this same offensive that Captain Truman nearly drew a court-martial trial on himself. One sunny afternoon, as his battery was moving forward into a new position, he stood on a knoll with his binoculars and swept the hills and countryside ahead of him. He was drawing in his mind a pin-point map of the territory ahead, familiarizing himself with the targets and the terrain. His glasses swung in a widening arc, and—suddenly he stiffened and grew still. There, some two thousand yards ahead and at one side, he saw clearly a German battery moving up into position to shell the advancing Americans. He ordered his battery to unhitch, dig in the timbers, and load. Then he calculated the distance, triangulated his fire, and gave the signal. The first two shots were overs, then two shorts. Captain Truman had what he wanted. He performed a fast calculation, reset the sights on the battery, and in less than two minutes laid down forty-one rounds in the middle of the German battery, scattering men and horses and guns over the hillside.

Ten minutes later his field telephone rang, and he answered. A colonel farther back yelled, "What are you doing firing out of your sector? You know damned well where you are to fire. I'm going to have you court-martialled!"

"Go ahead!" Truman shouted back, summoning up some Kansas City oaths. "There was a German battery moving into position in plain sight of us. I'll never pass up a chance like that. We plastered 'em. Besides, I think it's a fool order anyway."

The colonel clicked the receiver. Truman's battery had fired over into a sector belonging to the 28th Division. He waited for days for the court-martial order which never arrived.

On October 3 the battery was pulled out of the Meuse-Argonne and sent to the Sommedieue-Verdun sector. It moved into position on October 16 and fought through this offensive to November 7, then was put in the second Meuse-Argonne offensive.

On the morning of November 11, at 10.45—only a bare quarter of an hour before the Armistice became official—Battery D fired its last salvo of high-explosive shell on German positions near the little town of Hermaville, at 11,400 yards. It had fired six hundred rounds that day, and throughout the offensives it had fired some 14,000 rounds under Captain Truman's orders.

The batteries adjoining Truman's sustained 129 casualties and were badly shot up. Truman's battery had one killed and one wounded. At the final inspection of the 35th Division General Pershing walked up to Captain Truman and asked how many men of the battery were lost in the fighting.

"One killed and one wounded, sir," Captain Truman said.

"I see," said Black Jack Pershing. "You weren't with the regiment all the time, were you?"

"Yes, sir, right in the middle of it, all through it!" Truman replied, and Pershing shook his head and passed on.

"I guess it was the praying those Kansas City Irish Catholics did," Truman the Baptist reminisces.

The battery gave Truman one excruciatingly painful and embarrassing moment. At Courcemont the Prince of Wales sent a message to inform General Pershing that he would like to inspect the 35th. Pershing acquiesced, and the men were ordered into formation. It was raining hard, and they stood in mud and slush from 10 A.M. until 2 P.M. while the Prince inspected. Then he addressed the officers, while Battery D stood directly across a small creek. The little speech of praise and appreciation over, Truman leaped across the creek, sank in, and slogged up out of the mud to march his battery away. The Prince and General Pershing were standing



With hair closely cropped, First Lieutenant Truman is photographed in 1917. The next year, as a captain, he led his artillery battery through bitter fighting in France.

*Photo "European"*





After the first World War Truman was promoted to Major, and continued his military training. Here, sporting a moustache, he takes part in Army manoeuvres at Fort Riley, Kansas. Truman hates war, but believes it often develops strong latent qualities of character.

less than twenty yards away when a Battery D man sang out :  
 " Hey, Captain Truman ! What did the little ——— say about freeing Ireland ? "

If either the Prince or General Pershing heard the irreverent remark neither then disclosed it.

President Truman always explained his military career by saying, " I didn't do anything out of the ordinary. I was not wounded, and I got no citations of any kind." This is a little short of the truth. Officers who served with him described him—long before he became a United States senator—as one of the finest and toughest artillery officers in the whole army. He knew guns and he knew men. He knew the mud and numbing cold of rain and a bed on the ground, the gnaw of hunger when rations did not get up to the lines, and he was utterly unafraid. He was recommended for his majority by Colonel Demm, his commanding officer of regimental canteen days, but before the promotion came through he was discharged and promoted to a Major in the reserve corps.

He sailed back to the United States, landing in New York on May 6, 1919. His battery mates, as the boat pulled into New York harbour, presented Truman with a silver loving-cup which they had secretly purchased, just to let the Captain know that any past grudges were forgiven.

Captain Harry went straight to the farm at Grandview, to keep a most important engagement.

Harry Truman did then, and still does, consider himself a very lucky man when Bess Wallace said she would marry him. At thirty-five he was very excited after he had completed his bashful, somewhat embarrassed proposal at the Wallace home and had received the answer he so much wanted to hear. Bess Wallace had had many chances to marry other men, but she had preferred to wait for the boy she had kept company with from those days in school together. She liked his sincerity, his truthfulness, and unassuming friendliness,

and she had grown to love him through the years. Each had almost understood, even in high school eighteen years before, that some day they would get married.

The ceremony was performed on June 28, 1919, in Trinity Episcopal Church at Independence. The church is one of the oldest in all the country around—a small, red-brick structure with a room that is employed for meetings, church socials, and similar affairs. On the day of the wedding friends of the couple decorated the interior of the church with flowers taken in profusion from the gardens of their homes, and the chancel was banked with blossoms. The Rev. John W. Plunkett was severe in his dark attire, and Harry Truman was trembling in his grey suit, a colour he prefers even now.

Bess Wallace was a lovely bride. She wore a short, simply modelled white dress, a wide hat, and she carried no flowers. Instead, as she walked to the altar accompanied by two cousins, Louise Wells and Helen Wallace, she held an Episcopal prayer book. It was a simple wedding, and friends crowded the little church to witness it. None in all the gathering were prouder than the boys of the old Battery D, who turned out almost to the last man, all in civilian clothes, to see Captain Harry married, with another 'buddy,' Captain Theodore Marks, as best man.

When the ceremony was over Harry and Bess Truman left the church, drove the Stafford car to the big old Gates-Wallace house at 219 North Delaware Street, and there received guests before they left for their honeymoon trip to Chicago and then to Detroit.

When they returned they moved into this roomy house, which they have since acquired for themselves. Early in 1945 it looked quite worn and weatherbeaten, but since Truman became President it has had a fresh coat of white paint, and hereafter will serve as the summer White House, for the President intends to go back to Independence for visits.

It was in this same house that their daughter, Mary

Margarer, was born, on February 17, 1924. Dess Wallace preferred to have the baby at home, and the child was delivered by a kind, stately old gentleman who had long been the family physician, Dr C. E. Krimminger, a doctor of recognized skill and learning in the town.

Shortly after Truman was married he and his old Battery D 'buddies' organized the Officers Reserve Corps No. 1 at Kansas City, and he never lost interest in military training and policy. For years thereafter he regularly took the summer 'refresher' courses at Fort Leavenworth, over in Kansas, across the Missouri river. Officers who served with him at these summer schools pronounced him one of the best.

When the United States went to war again on December 7, 1941, Truman went to the cupboard in his five-room apartment in Washington, D.C., pulled on the old drab olive trousers and tunic. They fitted him. He was flat of stomach and lean of shoulder, and weighed 170 pounds, only slightly heavier than on November 11, 1918.

He went immediately to General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff, and offered his services. He said he wanted, if possible, to take command of an artillery battery.

General Marshall adjusted his glasses, said he appreciated it, but——

"Senator Truman, you've got a big job to do right up there at the Capitol, with your investigating Committee. Besides, Senator, this is a young man's war. We don't need any old stiffs like you." The last remark was affectionately to the point. Truman was fifty-seven then.

But when General Marshall advised Truman that he was too old the Senator replied: "I am younger than you are, General Marshall."

"Yes," replied the General, three years Truman's senior, "but I'm a general and you'd only be a colonel. You stay right where you are." This ended the discussion.

However, Truman complained to members of his Investigating Committee, and said, "Those were great days over

in France with Battery D. What gets me is that I'm sitting around now and letting others do the fighting."

Throughout the years after the first World War Truman kept in his home the heavy notebooks and service records he had kept as captain of Battery D. These records were vital in obtaining pension, medical, and other benefits for his old war companions, and no one of them ever asked for help without getting it. Annually the men of Battery D held a reunion, the last one immediately after Truman's nomination as candidate for Vice-President.

Truman was a good soldier. And any member of Battery D would insist that Truman was an able officer and a tough one, deserving of almost any rank.

From the time he took command, after five other officers had been broken out, no one in Battery D had ever doubted who issued the orders, nor did any man deny that here, in this unassuming officer, was a man of courage. He did not attempt the foolhardy, but he never ran or cringed in the face of danger.

In the lulls between the fighting he would take a bayonet or stick and draw battle diagrams in the mud of France and lecture his men on the great military engagements of history.

Truman could recall from memory the plans and execution of Civil War battles, the mistakes that were made, and the tactics that failed. He knew intimately the lives of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, the only two generals whose pictures were to hang later in his Senate office. He could recite details of the fighting at Thermopylae and Tours and had studied the Napoleonic wars down to the minutest manoeuvre.

Harry Truman learned war the way he has learned almost everything else in his life—the hard way, as a front-line soldier enduring the hardships, seeing the misery, and accepting the dangers.

*Politician*

THE year he returned from France Harry Truman decided to go into business, leaving brother Vivian to run the Grandview farm. This decision turned out to be heart-breaking and costly—one that kept his nose to the grindstone for years.

Eddie Jacobson visited him, and they talked over the days when they ran the regimental canteen at Fort Sill, how they had in six months piled up a 15,000 dollar profit on a 2,200 dollar investment. It was now 1919, and the war was over. Prices were good. Eddie knew merchandise. Truman had a little money saved up. It looked as if business would be good for years.

"Why don't we go in together, Harry?" Eddie asked. "We made money in the canteen and we can make it in Kansas City. We ought to have a clothing store, and I know one that can be bought. It's right close to the Muelbach Hotel."

The pair talked over the prospective profits, and the job of raising money—an initial investment of about 20,000 dollars—to get started. They decided to become clothing merchants. They set up shop at 104 West 12th Street, opposite the Muelbach, with Eddie acting as buyer and markup man, Truman serving at the counter, selling neckties, shirts, belts, socks, and suits. The store was a going concern. The first year the firm of Truman and Jacobson sold a hundred thousand dollars' worth of merchandise and showed a tidy return on its investment.

Clothing, however, is one of the most precarious of all merchandising ventures. A grocery store is calculated to turn over its entire stock every thirty days in the aggregate—that is, sell out and re-order entirely. People have to have groceries whether times are good or bad, for eating does not stop. A clothing stock, on the other hand, expertly managed, will not be turned over more than once every three or four months. The temptation to say “charge it” when ordering a suit is greater than when purchasing bacon. And when hard times come men wear their suits longer, thinner, and buy them cheaper.

This is exactly what happened to Truman and Jacobson. The second year business slumped. Bills got harder to pay. The credit accounts of the store were getting too large, and attempts to collect in money were becoming less and less fruitful.

In 1922 the firm failed. The depression of 1921—decline of farm prices, wages, and the first foreshadowings of the apple pedlars and soup lines of 1930-31—caused the store to go under. The crash did not cause much of a stir in Kansas City, but it was a major tragedy to Harry Truman. He borrowed what he could from banks on the security of the family farm, and began paying off.

This process of repayment continued thereafter for almost fifteen years. In the end Truman repaid every scrap that he owed—more than 20,000 dollars. Some adjustments of debt were made—knocked down—but the repayment was complete on the final establishment of money owed.

Truman repaid thousands of dollars out of his subsequent salaries, and for years the family lived a frugal, almost parsimonious existence.

Just as he had learned soldiering, learned farming, and learned to play the piano, Harry Truman was learning the rudiments of business and finance. This load of debt and the problem of repayment instilled in the Truman family a deep and fervent knowledge of the value of a dollar and, some-

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times, its inaccessibility. The family had always been careful buyers. Now they became *very* careful. They learned to know values and to seek them out. They discovered how to save a dollar instead of squandering it. Their pleasures were simple and few: an occasional visit to the cinema, sometimes a concert, a drive out into the rolling green hills around Independence.

At Camp Doniphan a young lieutenant named Jim Pendergast had served with Captain Truman and had admired him. Back in Kansas City his uncle, Tom Pendergast, was boss of one of the most powerful political machines in all the broad expanse of the United States. Uncle Tom controlled Kansas City and a balance of power in the state of Missouri. He was a big, heavy man, and pure Irish, with an Irishman's flair for hard-boiled, practical politics. Heavy pouches sagged under his eyes. He had a willingness to help those who voted right—that is, for Pendergast—and a predilection for squashing those who didn't. Uncle Tom had many and varied interests in contracting companies and cement firms, and it was common knowledge in Missouri's Democratic administrations that contractors awarded road construction jobs were expected to buy Uncle Tom's cement at premium prices.

Pendergast's second-floor office at 1908 Main Street was modest and unpretentious, but its roster of callers—governors, senators, state legislators, congressmen, ward 'heelers'—all testified that it was a fountain of influence. Here in the construction company politics was a major industry and building only incidental.

In 1922, at about the time that Truman and Jacobson were pulling down the haberdashery sign and turning the keys over to their creditors, a harried group of political agents was hunting for a strong candidate for the position of eastern district county judge of Jackson County. This group included Jim Pendergast, who acted as a sort of front-line lieutenant for Uncle Tom and the 'goat' faction of Democratic politicians. The 'goat' faction was the Pendergast group, and their opponents



within the party comprised the 'rabbits,' a faction that was ruled by the late Congressman Joseph (Uncle Joe) Shannon. The two groups were at open war in every 'primary,' and then, the battle over, seldom failed to consolidate their forces to lick the Republicans.

The perennial fights between the 'goats' and the 'rabbits' not only agitated Kansas City, but kept rural Jackson County in political turmoil. Soon after the Truman family moved to Independence father John Truman had become a close personal friend of James M. Callahan, one of eastern Jackson County's leading lawyers and head of the 'goat' faction in the Independence area. John Truman had fallen in with Callahan, and young Harry Truman was practically weaned on 'goat' politics.

Also Harry Truman had formed a warm friendship with young Jim Pendergast and with his father, Mike Pendergast (an older brother of Tom), who used to visit his son at Camp Doniphan. Mike controlled the tenth political ward in Kansas City, while Tom ruled the first ward.

In talks with his father young Jim Pendergast suggested that a soldier should be the candidate for the eastern district county judgeship. He advised that no better man could be found than Captain Truman, former commander of Battery D, since many ex-Battery D members lived in the over-crowded tenth ward. Mike Pendergast fell in with this proposal and spoke to Truman about it. But he received no definite answer. Truman was not particularly interested just then.

The 'goats' thereupon went to a grey-haired man named William Southern, a Democrat and editor of the *Independence Examiner*, a daily newspaper with the greatest Jackson County circulation besides the *Kansas City Star*. Bill Southern wrote a weekly Bible column which was widely syndicated. He had met Harry Truman many times at church and Sunday-school meetings. He told the 'goats' that they should insist that Truman run for judge, and he talked personally to Truman in such terms. Truman thought it over again and

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finally told Southern that if there were no strings attached to the support of the 'goat' faction he would have a try. He came to this decision because he had always been interested in politics, and besides, the clothing store was gone, and he needed work.

This was the beginning of as strange a political coalition as has been seen almost anywhere. Ultimately Tom Pendergast was to land in the penitentiary and Harry Truman was to go to the White House.

The Pendergast machine was ruled by a hand of iron. Uncle Tom was no parlour politician, and he knew all the tricks of nasty in-fighting. His methods in a campaign were ridiculously simple: to gather up all the money possible, spend it freely where needed, pick your own man, and drive the machine along behind him. If necessary get some stooges in the primary to split the vote of any candidate threatening to upset the machine politician, and never hesitate to do political favours or demand support in return.

Uncle Tom decided to run Truman for the county judgeship, and Truman was confident, for, as he said later, "I had kinfolks in every precinct." They would go out and prepare the way for him. The 'rabbits' put up E. B. Montgomery, a banker at Blue Springs, and two independents entered the race—George Shaw, a road contractor, and James Compton, a judge serving by appointment. Truman had an old Dodge roadster, its fenders battered and its motor wheezing and puffing at every slight incline. He bumped and rattled over the county in this machine, and when the votes were counted he had won by a majority of five hundred ballots. He served out his first term with credit, then ran again, but was defeated. He was also studying law at nights at the Kansas City School of Law, no outstanding college, but a sound one, and he liked the law. His instructor, Arnwell L. Cooper, recalls that Truman was a first-rate student and one of the leaders in his law class. In his spare time Truman took lessons and learned to swim at the Kansas City Athletic Club.

It must have been a strange first meeting between Tom Pendergast and Harry Truman. Truman asked for Pendergast's support, and in the same breath he told the political chief that while he was a loyal Democrat he expected, if elected, to be and remain scrupulously honest, to work hard, and by a record of honesty and fair dealing to make whatever votes he could for the Pendergast Democrats.

After his defeat in 1924, at the end of his first term in the county court, Truman looked round for another job. He helped to organize the Kansas City Automobile Club and soon had a successful venture going, with some hundreds of members. The club supplied road information, maps, and a variety of services, besides working in the interest of more and better roads in Missouri. Within less than two years Truman had expanded the membership to more than three thousand. But he yearned to go back to politics.

In Missouri the county judges need not be lawyers. They try no cases and hear no suits. They are elected for two years as 'judges' to run the county's business. They let contracts, draw up the budgets, allocate moneys to institutions and civic developments, recommend tax schedules for public referendum, plan public works, manage the county charitable institutions, and grant pensions to the poor. The arm of Pendergast was shoulder deep in all of these doings, for Pendergast not only ran Kansas City; he manipulated the state.

In 1926 Truman wanted to run for County Collector of Jackson County, a position that held a salary of up to 25,000 dollars a year, but Tom Pendergast demurred, saying the job had been promised to a lifelong 'goat' Democrat. Instead, Pendergast offered Truman the nomination for presiding judge of the county court. He reluctantly accepted Boss Tom's offer, although in so doing he offended Mike Pendergast, who wanted Truman to try for County Collector regardless of any prior agreement. Truman ran for presiding judge and was elected by a margin of 16,000 votes. Because both the 'goats' and the 'rabbits' had been beaten in the bitter

election of 1924 they had consolidated forces and were agreed on the ticket without a fight. The county then was paying banks 6 per cent. on the revenue anticipation notes it sold to finance its government, and under the law it could sell only 90 per cent. of the amount it fairly expected to receive from its taxes. Truman went to the Kansas City banks and asked for a reduction in the interest rates, and then went back and told the court that the banks had talked as if they thought he was trying to steal from them by such a proposition. He boarded a train for Chicago, talked to the bankers there, and succeeded in getting the interest cut to 4½ per cent. by marketing the notes in Chicago. By the time he left the county court he had helped to bring the interest rates down to 1½ per cent.

In 1928 Truman ran again for presiding judge, and the big issue in this campaign was honesty—would the Pendergast company be allowed to steal a march on Jackson County?

The year before Truman had surveyed the county and proposed a road-construction programme requiring a ten-million-dollar bond outlay. Truman had also suggested a new county court house for Kansas City and renovation for the one in Independence.

At the same time Kansas City was also planning improvements, including many new public buildings in the Kansas City area. With the help of a committee of a hundred they expected to launch a thirty-two million dollar bond issue.

Truman went to both Pendergast and Shannon and told them he thought Jackson County should participate in the building plan, or, at least, in the road-improvement programme. Pendergast did not think that the county's 11,500,000-dollar share of the bond issue would be successful; such a proposition never had. But Truman insisted it would, because "I intend to tell the taxpayers exactly what I'm going to do, and I will do it."

Boss Tom laughed and said, "Tell them what you please."

"I will," said Truman, "and then I will carry it out."

"Well," replied Pendergast, "if you carry the bond issue you can certainly carry it out." Shannon and Pendergast controlled the majority on the county court, and Truman needed this assurance.

But to the voters the real question was : would Pendergast contractors or Pendergast cement build those roads at fancy prices ? If that question could be resolved in the negative the bonds would be taken up and the improvements would be made. Newspapers were asking whether the fund was in fact for public improvement, or just a silver lining for the pockets of the Pendergast organization.

Truman went out and met the issue head-on. He told the voters :

"The bond issue is going to carry. If you elect me I pledge you that every cent of contracts for roads will be let to the lowest bidder in open bidding." Truman repeated this in scores of speeches throughout the county. He won, the bond issue carried, and Jackson County sat back to watch.

The surveys were made, and the county court advertised for tenders. Immediately all the jackals that clung to or made up the Pendergast machine swarmed into Harry Truman's office. They urged him to hand out the contracts, not to ask for tenders, not to wait for the low bidders. They would build the roads they said, and do a good job, a money-saving job ; why spend a lot of money advertising in the Republican *Kansas City Star* that every day in its editorial called Truman and Pendergast a pair of thieves ?

"I promised the people these roads would be built under contracts assigned to the low bidders in wide-open bidding," Truman said. "The roads will be built that way. There's no use asking anything else."

Within a few days Tom Pendergast telephoned. He said he would like to see the Presiding Judge. Truman left the county court house and went to Pendergast's office. There he found the same group of contractors who had insisted that he should conveniently forget all about his campaign pledges.

Pendergast repeated their arguments, and asked why they shouldn't be given contracts.

He did not ask it as a demand or a command, but seemingly as a matter of information. Truman's reply was immediate: "Because I pledged the people that contracts would be let to the low bidders on open bidding. That's the way it will be done."

Tom Pendergast spun round to the contractors and growled, "Well, see there, I told you he wouldn't change. He says they'll be let on low bids. That's the way they'll be let. Now get out of my office and leave me alone."

When the contractors had left the office Pendergast said to Truman, "You carry out the contract with the taxpayers just as you told them you would carry it out, and I will support you." Truman did, and the money was spent as it should have been. Later Truman obtained an additional 3,500,000 dollars for his building programme and this too, was carried out on exactly the same basis.

"Tom Pendergast never asked me to do a dishonest deed," Harry Truman said, not once, but many times. "He knew I wouldn't do it if he asked it. He was always my friend. He was always honest with me, and when he made a promise he kept it. If he told me something I knew it was the truth. When Tom Pendergast was down and out, a convicted felon, the Kansas City and St Louis papers demanded that I denounce him. I refused, and then they denounced me.

"I wouldn't kick a friend, and I wouldn't kick him when he was down. The newspapers poured it on me, but in public office you can't let the newspapers dictate your life and thought."

It was not that Harry Truman condoned Pendergast's thefts and evasions of Federal income taxes, but rather that Tom Pendergast had befriended him, had been personally honest with him, and he was not going to renounce a friend. That was the way Truman saw it morally.

The roads were built in Jackson County, and when the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Treasury income tax division descended on Tom Pendergast they moved in also on Harry Truman. They combed the files and amassed an amazing record of bribery and thievery against Pendergast, but found not one iota of corruption in all Truman's career. When, in 1944, Truman was nominated for the Vice-President the man who prosecuted and sent Pendergast to prison, District Attorney Maurice Milligan, at Kansas City, was asked by a reporter about Truman's record. Milligan said he had examined Truman's record but had found nothing of dishonesty and nothing deserving censure.

Two of the men associated with Truman on the Jackson County court have publicly upheld his administration as clean, honest, and honourable. They were N. T. Veatch, a Republican of Kansas City, and Major-General E. M. Stayton, retired, a Democrat and once commander of the 35th Missouri National Guard Division.

"I never heard of any undue waste or corruption during his administration," stated General Stayton. "He administered the . . . programme with the highest degree of efficiency, economy, and integrity." Veatch's report was equally forthright and complimentary.

There is no doubt that had Harry Truman been vulnerable to charges of corruption or bribery or theft, the Federal Government would have prosecuted him. Milligan and the Milligan family were political enemies of Truman. District Attorney Milligan literally mowed down the Pendergast organization, but Harry Truman's sheet was clean and his record unimpeachable.

Truman had hardly entered into politics when his opponents spread the report that he had belonged to the Ku Klux Klan. The issue was raised in his second campaign for county judge, and he met it squarely, demanded proof, and got none. He then demonstrated that instead of belonging to the Klan he had denounced it fervently throughout Jackson County.

## POLITICIAN

During the 1944 Vice-Presidential campaign hostile newspapers, just before the election, published a purported affidavit to the effect that Truman had indeed belonged to this nefarious organization. The charge was as false as if he had been accused of being in the secret pay of Adolf Hitler. As a matter of fact, Truman himself was a high Mason, and, furthermore, two of his close advisers on the campaign train were Catholics, Matthew J. Connelly and Edward McKim. The public, recognizing yellow journalism, disregarded the accusation.

The charges that Truman had once belonged to the Ku Klux Klan were made late in October, calculated to have the most effect upon the election and offering the least opportunity for rebuttal before the voting, on November 7.

The Klan charges made during the Vice-Presidential campaign were based on such flimsy evidence and were so patently unfair that they had simply no effect on the election. For a while Truman debated with himself whether to file suits for libel to expose in all its nakedness the injustice of the publications. He finally abandoned the notion after discussing the whole affair with his wife Bess. They concluded that should he take the matter to court he would only prolong the memory of an unsavoury falsity that the public was quickly forgetting.

The affair was a cruel and calculated attack on a man who holds dear, above all other things, his honesty and his integrity.

Truman is proud that he is a politician, and he has never been known to offer any excuses for the profession. He considers it honourable and decent, and readily admits that he plays politics. "A politician is the ablest man in government, and when he's dead they call him a statesman," he reasons.

He accepted support from Pendergast for the simple reason that in Missouri in the 1920's it was practically hopeless to run for office—in Jackson County or the state elections without influential assistance.

In many ways Harry Truman was a valuable asset to the



Pendergast organization. He regularly ran from thirty to fifty thousand votes ahead of the machine slate, and picked up votes for the machine. It, in return, supplied him with tens of thousands of votes which could be counted as certain even before the polls opened.

Then, too, Harry Truman supplied an element and façade of honesty and integrity which Pendergast could hardly claim without him. His term as county judge had been marked by a bi-partisan responsibility on the county court, and by an absence of bribery in this branch of the government. Schools, care of the insane, the roads—all had shown a marked improvement. And the Pendergast organization could, with no small pride, point to this efficient, likeable fellow and his honest administration when charges of corruption, theft, political favouritism and governmental chicanery were brought up.

Truman was one Pendergast man who went to the highest office, freely admitting that politics was his profession, and arrived there clean and happy, though by financial standards relatively poor.



Harry Truman (*in foreground*) leaning against the counter of his haberdashery store, which he ran with Eddie Jacobson, in Kansas City. In the rear stand several cronies of war days who used to come in to buy a shirt or swap the latest gossip. The firm of Truman and Jacobson failed in 1922, and it took Truman fifteen years to pay off his debts.

*Photo Press Association, Inc.*



Truman and his mother in 1934, following his election to the United States Senate. Old Miss Truman is not overwhelmed by her son's rise to world prominence. When she visited Washington after he became President she admonished crowds of reporters and bystanders at the airport by commenting, "Oh, fiddlesticks!"

*Photo Press Association Inc.*

## CHAPTER SIX

### *Senator*

HARRY TRUMAN has said many times that he never really wanted to be anything other than a Senator from Missouri.

On April 10, 1945, Vice-President Truman stood in front of the white marble dais in the Senate chamber talking with a group of reporters he knew and admired for their fairness and industry.

"Boys," he said slowly, "here's the only place for me, right here in the Senate. But I feel frustrated in the Vice-Presidency. All I've ever wanted to be is Senator. Maybe some day I'll get to come back as a Senator."

Less than forty-eight hours later he was President of the United States.

Two weeks before, while presiding over the Senate, he had spied former Senator Prentiss M. Brown of Michigan listening to the debate at the back of the chamber. Truman summoned a page-boy and scrawled a little note in pencil:

DEAR PRENTISS,

Ain't it hell. We're both muzzled now. You have my sympathy.

HARRY.

When Truman began his first term in the Senate in 1935 he was aware and sensitive of the stigma that others had spread like a mantle over his election and his character.

Here was an obscure county judge whom boss-ruled machine

politics had raised to the eminence of United States Senator, though such a thing had been known many times before in American politics. Harry Truman knew the hard, political facts of life. He sought a political career. He wanted to be an office-holder, not an also ran. It was simple arithmetic to work out that to be elected he needed the support of those who had the votes on election day. When the cry of 'bossism' was again raised during Truman's campaign for Vice-President he observed realistically "a boss-ruled political machine is a bad thing, if the machine is not on your side."

Yet when Harry Truman was sworn in as Senator he sensed that his background was unpromising and his future uncertain. Some of the more venerable statesmen in the Senate gave him a wide berth. His Democratic colleague, Bennett Champ Clark, was not even on friendly political terms with him.

Truman realized that his arrival in the Senate had been in a sense a political accident. When, in 1926, he had asked Tom Pendergast to support him for county collector he had had visions of serving in the job for a few years until he could pay off his debts with the salary and fees it afforded, and then retire to the farm to spend the rest of his days there. It was fortunate that Tom Pendergast had promised the job to another. Truman had carried on manfully as county judge, had instituted a building and budget reform programme that with Pendergast's support had won re-election by a 58,000-vote majority in 1930.

It was at this time that Truman began to look to Washington, and to think of running for Congress. In 1932, because it had failed to redistrict under the 1930 census, Missouri elected all of its Congressmen at large. In 1933 the legislature met and did redistrict the state. Harry Truman was in the thick of that session at Jefferson City, and when the redistricting law was signed he had just what he wanted—the Fourth Missouri District comprised of rural Jackson County, an area where he felt he was sure of overwhelming

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support and steady re-election. In 1934 he wanted to run for Congress, but again Boss Tom said no. He had promised that district to C. Jasper Bell.

Politics were hot in Missouri that year. In 1932 both the 'goats' and 'rabbits' of Pendergast and Shannon had fought vainly against the nomination of Bennett Champ Clark, of St Louis, and both had suffered a sound defeat. The old sores of that fight still festered in the party. There was talk that, despite President Roosevelt's popularity, the state might re-elect its Republican Senator Roscoe Patterson.

The state was conducting a referendum on a road bond issue, and Harry Truman, at the suggestion of state officials, had travelled round making speeches in support of it. He had spoken in some thirty-five counties, and gradually the ambition to stand for governor had begun to dawn upon him.

There is a purely erroneous story that Truman in that year went to Tom Pendergast and again asked his support for collector of revenue, and was told, "You can't have it, Harry. I've already promised it to another. The best I can do for you is United States Senator." And there is another embellishment that later Boss Tom said he had supported Truman to show Missouri that "I could send an office-boy to the United States Senate." There is no truth in either version.

In May of that same year, 1934, while Truman was speaking in south central Missouri for the bond issue at Warsaw, he received a call from Sedalia. It was James P. Aylward, the Democratic State Chairman, and with him was nephew Jim Pendergast. They wanted Truman to meet them at the Bothwell Hotel in Sedalia. Truman drove over to see them, and they urged him to stand for the Senate, promising Boss Tom's support. Truman said he wanted to stand for Governor, but they made it clear he couldn't get support for that office. So Harry Truman stood for the Senate.

Whether Pendergast expected Truman to win is not and

never will be known. Certainly when Truman announced his candidacy the voters of Missouri greeted the news with apathy. As is the case with most primary elections in America, the average citizen did not know what was going on at the ward clubs and cared less. This was politics—a game for the professionals, who understood the rules and had the stomach to fight for the spoils.

The leading Democratic candidate at the time was a popular ex-Congressman, Jacob Milligan, brother of the attorney who was later to convict Pendergast, and he had the eastern Missouri support of Bennett Champ Clark and his strong machine in St Louis.

It was the Pendergast machine against the St Louis machine, with the outcome to be settled by rural Missouri voters, those political agnostics who do not hesitate to vote one way in one election and diametrically opposite in the next. The Clark-Milligan machine blanketed the state with speeches denouncing bossism. Truman was depicted as an errand-boy for Boss Tom Pendergast, and Tom as having his hand deep in the pockets of Missouri and now reaching out to tap the Federal Treasury. The Pendergast machine replied with assertions that Milligan was an instrument for Bennett Clark, that Clark wanted to be two Senators instead of one, and that he had delusions of becoming President. It was a bitter, mud-slinging battle, with Truman, in the earlier stages, distinctly the underdog.

Bennett Clark, a master of scathing oratory and with a flair for finding and portraying the ridiculous in any situation, stumped for Milligan. However, at a crucial moment Congressman John J. Cochran, of St Louis—a red-haired, dynamic man with a solid Democratic record entered this primary contest. He fought both Truman and Milligan. There was talk that Cochran was instructed by Pendergast to split the Milligan vote in St Louis. Whether this was true or not, it became the result of Cochran's participation. Truman was nominated by a majority of 40,000 votes and

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was elected in the fall, displacing the incumbent Republican Senator Patterson.

It was this background that caused a cloud to hang over Harry Truman when he took his Senate seat, and he was fully aware of it, as he often confessed later. In his first speeches in the Senate he claimed no other distinction than that he was just "a farm boy from Jackson County."

The first four years in the Senate were plodding years. Truman struggled vigorously to plough a straight furrow, as he had done on the farm. He lived quietly, remained silent, and worked hard. He studied voluminous reports of committee hearings. He read faithfully the *Congressional Record* and the newspapers, and spent long hours in the reading-room of the Library of Congress. He observed the men with whom he worked and who shared the responsibilities of the Senate. One of the first to accept him was Carl Hatch, of New Mexico; another was John Nance Garner, the Vice-President; a third was Burton K. Wheeler, of Montana, for Truman was placed on his Interstate Commerce Committee. Wheeler soon realized that Truman was a sincere man and a diligent worker—if anything, overly sensitive of his own limitations.

Meanwhile Truman's retentive mind continued to sweep up and catalogue every scrap of personal and political information about each of his colleagues. He knew which men were conservative and which liberal, and understood the motives and reasons for their views. He soon found out which men worked hard and which ones loafed. He listened to the political worries and troubles of each one. He knew the personal and political prejudices of the Senators; even their favourite food and drink, the books they liked to read, their stories, their secret ambitions, the strengths and weaknesses of every member.

Truman never missed an opportunity to render, if possible and justified, some favour to another Senator. He was friendly, considerate, and helpful by nature. As time went



by Truman's relations warmed with Bennett Champ Clark, son of the Speaker who, in the 1912 Baltimore Convention, had barely lost the nomination to Woodrow Wilson. But the pair handled Missouri's part of national politics in an atmosphere of armistice rather than friendliness.

These were the apprentice years for Harry Truman. His first promotion came from Senator Wheeler. An investigation of the railway system was voted for, and the inquiry was delegated to the Interstate Commerce Committee, which Wheeler headed. Wheeler engaged a brilliant attorney, Max Lowenthal, and then turned the entire investigation over to Harry Truman, who was made chairman of the sub-committee.

Truman's knowledge of railways was largely confined to riding the Missouri Pacific and the Baltimore and Ohio from Kansas City to Washington and to his youthful, boisterous days as time-keeper on the Santa Fé. He set out at once to remedy this deficiency. For months thereafter, while Wheeler was mending political fences in Montana, Senator Truman conducted the railways investigation with fairness and extreme thoroughness. Railway attorneys had no occasion to complain that they were being mishandled by the committee. The Chairman was always ready and eager to accept evidence on both sides. He went to the bottom of things, and it was clear from the record and from his conduct that he sought only the truth as he saw it. The result was the enactment of a national transportation act which Truman largely wrote, with Lowenthal's and Wheeler's assistance. Later Truman also wrote most of the Civil Aeronautics Act.

The railways inquiry was the first real opportunity Truman had to establish himself as a Senator of importance and calibre. His performance earned the respect of his colleagues, and gradually those who had regarded him with cool reserve began to thaw out towards the mild-mannered, sincere man from Missouri.

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Predominantly Senator Truman voted with the administration, although he did desert the fold to vote against a 4,800,000,000-dollar relief appropriation. And in 1936, when Joseph T. Robinson, of Arkansas, died and the great struggle for leadership of the Senate ensued, with Roosevelt backing Alben W. Barkley, of Kentucky, against the conservatives' Pat Harrison, of Mississippi, Truman's vote was in doubt. A call went from the Democratic Chairman's—Jim Farley's—office in Washington to Tom Pendergast in Colorado Springs, asking him to "line up Harry on the right side." Pendergast telephoned Truman, and asked him to vote for Barkley.

"Look here, Harry," he said, "Jim Farley just called and asked me if I couldn't talk to you about voting for Barkley. Can't you do that?"

"No, Tom, I can't," Truman answered. "I've made up my mind to vote for Pat Harrison, of Mississippi, and I'm going to do it."

"Well, Harry," old Tom said, "I told him you were the contrariest guy in the world, so I guess that's that."

Truman voted for Pat Harrison, but Barkley became Majority Leader.

On the Appropriations Committee Truman worked long, tedious hours and sought to acquaint himself thoroughly with the mass of wearying and dreary detail that passed across the committee tables or was lodged in the reams of testimony taken in executive sessions. He was particularly interested in military appropriations, and served on this sub-committee. His philosophy was to give the Army what it needed and to require a strict accounting of expenditure. His knowledge of military expenditures and military procedure, thus gained, was to be invaluable later when he set out to investigate America's gigantic 250 billion dollar national defence and war programme. A man with lesser knowledge and experience would have been lost in its maze of staggering expenses.

In the 1940 Senatorial election Truman had the closest

call of his political career. A crusading Federal District Attorney at Kansas City, Maurice Milligan—brother of the Jacob Milligan whom Truman had defeated in the previous election—resigned in order to stand against Truman for the Democratic nomination. Milligan had been prosecuting with zeal, sending Pendergast politicians to gaol. Two hundred and seventy-eight of Pendergast's ward 'heelers' and election officers in Kansas City were ultimately indicted for ballot frauds, and Milligan sent 258 of them to the penitentiary. He had even succeeded the year before in convicting Boss Tom himself.

Pendergast in his prosperous days had lived grandly. He had, said many a Missourian and many a newspaper, hoodwinked the state systematically over a period of years. He had wagered as much as two million dollars on the race tracks in a single year, and had lost as much as six hundred thousand dollars. However, his actual financial status was not revealed until 1945, when his will was published after his death. Then Kansas City residents learned the almost unbelievable facts. The safety deposit box in which, some had averred, might be found half the wealth of Missouri yielded only two one-thousand-dollar Government bonds; cash and bank deposits amounted to less than five thousand dollars. His entire personal estate, after deducting a debt of 107,609 dollars 84 cents, amounted to only 13,615 dollars 38 cents.

It was his gambling losses which eventually brought him to prison. Milligan's investigators discovered that in 1935 and 1936 Tom had not reported for income tax to the tune of 460,000 dollars. He had taken this as part payment on a 750,000-dollar bribe he was to receive in return for arranging for a group of fire insurance companies a dispute with the state of Missouri over some ten million dollars due to policyholders as rebates on excessive charges. It was by means of this bribe that he sought to recover from his gambling losses.

Milligan had sent Tom to Leavenworth Penitentiary for fifteen months for tax evasion, and put him on a five-

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year probationary sentence on another charge. Otto Higgins, the Kansas City director of police, had also gone to prison, and so had Emmett O'Malley, the Pendergast state commissioner of insurance, and Matt Murray, the Pendergast state director of the Works Progress Administration. The Pendergast organization was beginning to show unmistakable signs of disintegration.

Milligan was a state figure in Missouri, and his campaign was concentrated on one theme: get rid of the Pendergast figurehead, Harry Truman!

Missouri's considerably popular Governor, Lloyd C. Stark, of Hannibal, in North-east Missouri, likewise entered the race. He was counting on the farm vote, and reasoned that Milligan and Truman would each finish off the other. It was, indeed, a retrogressive farmer who had not at one time or another planted in his orchard some of the Governor's famous 'Stark's Delicious' apple-trees, ordered from the Hannibal nursery. The name of Stark was a farm by-word in Missouri. Then, too, there had been talk that Stark might be appointed Secretary of the Navy by President Roosevelt. And at the Chicago convention Stark had been a receptive, if unsuccessful, candidate for the nomination for Vice-President—until Roosevelt named Henry Wallace as his runner-up.

Governor Stark had supported Harry Truman in 1934, and when he ran for Governor in 1936 Stark sought the aid and assistance of the Pendergast organization. At that time he did not know how to approach Boss Tom, but he was on friendly terms with Truman, calling often at his office in Washington, and was only slightly less friendly with Senator Clark. At Stark's request the two Senators went to New York and met Boss Tom in his suite at the Waldorf-Astoria soon after he had disembarked from an Italian luxury liner following a tour of Europe. They told Pendergast what was in Stark's mind, that he wanted Pendergast's support, and Truman warmly urged that Stark was a dependable, loyal Democrat. At the time there were reports

that Senator Clark was less enthusiastic, but the two Senators carried back word to Stark that if he could round up the support of county Democratic leaders in a sizable portion of rural Missouri Pendergast would support him, and they told him the men he should see. Stark had followed instructions, Pendergast had kept his pledge, and the nursery-man was elected Governor of Missouri in 1936.

It was a bitter fight in Missouri during the 1940 election. There was little doubt that the Roosevelt administration wanted Milligan to win.

In 1938 Senator Clark had obtained Milligan's appointment as Federal Attorney and Truman had aggressively fought the nomination in the Senate. President Roosevelt disregarded his protests, and newspapers in and out of Missouri cried loudly that Truman's opposition was a "dirty job" that he had been ordered to perform by his chief, Pendergast. On February 15, 1938, Truman took the floor to protest against the nomination and asked the Senate to reject Milligan. Red-faced and confident, Bennett Champ Clark sat by with a pocket full of notes, the outline of a bitter and critical speech. He did not deliver it. He waited until Truman had finished; then called for a vote.

By a voice vote the Senate confirmed Milligan, and only Truman voted in the negative.

Yet it was in the same year, 1938, that Clark began losing political ground in Missouri and felt the need of the support of the Pendergast organization. And it was Harry Truman who wanted him to have it. In Maryville, Missouri, early in April, Truman made a speech endorsing Clark and was booed by an audience in his home state for the first and only time. Then he made another speech for Clark in Springfield a few days later. By these endorsements he forced Pendergast to support Clark.

By the time the election year 1940 came round Pendergast was in prison and Clark chose neither to support nor attack his personal choice, Maurice Milligan, the District Attorney.

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He backed Truman, though he made no speeches on his behalf and did not solicit publicly for Truman's candidacy until a few days before the local election. He confined his campaigning to issuing statements in the Press against Governor Stark, who had waged unceasing war on Pendergast after having been elected with his support four years before. Clark referred to Stark's "ill-fated, short-lived, and ludicrous candidacy for Vice-President at Chicago," and ridiculed reports that Stark would become Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of War, Postmaster General, or for any other Federal position of dimension and stature.

The newspapers of the state were almost unanimously against Truman, and the *Kansas City Star* and *The Times*, scenting a political kill raised a great hue and cry against bossism which the Press of the state took up. The powerful *St Louis Post-Dispatch* printed one of its classic Fitzpatrick cartoons just before the August primary date, showing two mammoth lorries, one labelled 'Stark' and the other 'Milligan,' in a headlong crash with Truman depicted as driving a little kiddy-car between. It was labelled 'No place for a kiddy-car.'

Political wiseacres predicted that Truman would be defeated right at the very beginning, and Truman himself was not optimistic of his chances. He said later that this was the bitterest, dirtiest political fight he had ever witnessed. There were few charges or insinuations that were not used, and 'thief' became a common word during the campaign. On the night of the primary Truman went to bed about midnight, a disillusioned and sorely tried man. He was 11,000 votes behind Milligan and apparently defeated. When he got up in the morning the late returns showed that he was renominated by a slim 8400-vote majority. The state had been shaken to its foundations by the bitter fight, and the Democratic party had been seriously jolted. It would take years for the scars of this campaign to heal. The Republicans were jubilant. Such a Democratic brawl was just what they wanted. They

could quote Democrats as authority that Democrats were thieves, and they fully expected to carry the state. But President Roosevelt's third-term sweep of Missouri helped Truman to win re-election in November over Republican Marvel H. Davis by a 44,000-vote majority.

Milligan was again reappointed as District Attorney. This time Truman did not object, and agreed to the appointment. If he had not Milligan would not have been confirmed. Subsequently however, Truman, as Vice-President, vigorously opposed a third appointment. The reappointment was delayed, and later, as President, Truman—honestly disdainful of the criticism that might accrue—declined to reappoint Milligan. In Milligan's place he named Sam Wear, of Springfield, a lifelong Democrat and a man who, at the Chicago convention, had insisted that only Truman was out of order when the Senator sought to discourage Wear's endorsement of him for Vice-President. Truman's record of opposition to Milligan was thoroughly consistent. As far as Truman was concerned the Pendergast record was only incidental. Truman simply did not consider Milligan to be a capable, fair-minded attorney. As President he removed him, saying that he had enjoyed for long enough an office that should be "passed around."

Truman's record in the Senate largely followed the administration line, but rather by conviction than by political servitude. In this record is a guide to an understanding of Truman's thoughts and policies. On preparedness and foreign policy his voting record is consistently and realistically forthright. He is a progressive conservative on domestic policy. His is not a senatorial record that bespeaks either imagination or startling innovations of policy, though Truman is inherently liberal. He has been the economic and political underdog long enough to have developed this tendency. But he is not an extremist. He has never associated or moved in either right or left organizations or groups.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### *Investigator*

THREE months after the Senatorial election of 1940, in which Harry Truman had such a narrow political escape, he took the first steps on a course destined to lead to the White House.

It was in mid-January that Truman began to receive reports which were most disturbing to a man who knows the value of a dollar. No one then imagined the ultimate size of the American national defence programme. There was talk of 150 billion dollars for war programmes, and possibly a hundred billion more. Grants of ten billion dollars in a lump were being ground through the Appropriations Committee, and authorizations for still greater expenditures were coming from the legislative Military Affairs Committee, on both of which Truman served. Not even the most visionary Senators had conceived a sum of 250,000,000,000 dollars. For all practical purposes it amounted only to a staggering row of ciphers and figures headed by a dollar sign.

Truman was getting letters from Missouri complaining that money was being wasted with a disregard of public welfare in the construction of Fort Leonard Wood. The immense camp construction programme was just getting under way, and if the reports were true it was apparent that millions of dollars would be thrown away before the growing United States Army was even housed.

The Senator decided to see for himself. On a cold, wintry morning he loaded his suitcases into his car, and drove, unannounced, straight from Washington and to the Fort.



He arrived without fanfare, and strolled quietly through the sprawling huts and skeleton frameworks of great barracks. He saw men loafing and getting paid for it. He saw material piled almost as high as an Ozark mountain—material that would not be used for months, if at all. On every hand he saw evidence of waste and poor management. He realized that in two decades of peace America had failed to plan enough for war. He remembered the last time and the wave of disillusionment that followed. He made notes on all that he saw. Then he called on foremen and contractors and asked for estimates of cost, and reports on the amounts of money expended, salary schedules, and weekly time-sheets and pay-rolls. He requested everything he could think of that would give him a clue to the real facts behind this phase of the national defence programme.

Truman left the camp with a brief case filled with evidence, and then drove on to Independence and visited his mother while he rested for several days. Then he took a circuitous route and drove back to Washington, visiting camp construction projects along the way. At each stop he gathered similar data to that which he had obtained at Fort Leonard Wood. Everywhere the story was the same.

The gigantic programme for building camps and permanent cantonments was under the supervision of the Army Quartermaster Corps. Speed was essential and haste was making for waste. But here was such a huge task of purchasing and managing as had never before been faced by the Army. It had not even been visualized, and the much-advertized plans for M-Day simply did not exist. There were no specifications, so contractors could not tender for the jobs. Cost-plus-fixed-fee contracts had to be let, and cost estimates on projects would be constantly revised and always upward. There was no incentive to save. Even though the fee was fixed, contractors knew that specifications could be changed and that a more expensive job would furnish a basis for a higher fee.

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Truman returned to Washington in a furious mood. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee he had voted to provide these billions for national defence, and now the money was being wasted. On February 10, 1941, he got up and told the Senate about it. He insisted that to avoid a national scandal and to spur on the defence effort a special committee should be established that would hunt down waste and inefficiency, and open up the bottlenecks that were jamming the programme. His thesis was simple: "Investigate as you go along. What's the sense in looking back years later and showing how bad things were at the time?"

Truman's point was well taken. After the first World War there had been 116 investigating committees. Their proceedings were often marked with bitter political controversies, muck-raking investigations, and attacks on business. All they ever proved was how not to run a war.

It was this realization that prompted Truman to introduce what was to become one of the most famous resolutions in modern Senate history—Senate Resolution 71, to establish just such a committee as he had proposed. The resolution was referred to the Military Affairs Committee and unanimously approved. Thereupon, however, the then Senator James F. Byrnes, Chairman of the Committee on Audit and Control, laid the resolution aside and the Senate proceeded to think it over. The Administration looked with some misgivings upon this proposal. There were risks involved. The Committee could become a sieve for defence secrets which it could prise loose. It could hamper military plans and frustrate busy generals. It might cause the promoters of the defence effort to temporize and hedge their decisions, lest they be hauled up and criticized for their honest efforts. It might interfere with the success of the gathering war programme, and could do irreparable harm to public morale.

There was some logic in these arguments, but a logic that failed to give full weight to Truman's fair-mindedness

and his own earnest desire to make the defence programme an efficient and sound one.

Truman was convinced that the investigation should get under way immediately. Moreover, his speech on national defence waste had brought in correspondence from the people, who themselves realized the need for continuing vigilance.

It was on March 1, 1941, that the Senate passed Senate Resolution 71, setting up a committee of seven Senators and granting 15,000 dollars of the 25,000 which Truman had requested. Truman, being the sponsor of the resolution, was made chairman. He accepted the money allowance graciously and set out to justify even this small expenditure.

It was under these circumstances that the Committee was launched on its illustrious career. It had little money, no prestige, the heavy suspicion of governmental departments, and an almost unbelievable task of guiding a programme which was expanding so rapidly as to be almost beyond human comprehension. Probably no other committee in Congress was created with less immediate promise and turned it into more substantial recognition and esteem.

As it turned out, greater care has rarely been exercised than in the selection of the members of this Committee. They were in a sense the blue-riband grand jury of the American Congress, and the task they set themselves when they organized in the Spring of 1941 in the office of Harry Truman, of Missouri, was a monumental one.

The Committee's first job was to engage a lawyer, and here it registered an early major success. Political plebeians with quaint and sometimes nebulous legal qualifications were storming the Committee looking for jobs. The members allotted Truman the task of finding a competent lawyer, and he went directly to the then Attorney-General, Robert Jackson, for advice. Up in New York Jackson had a Special Assistant in his early thirties who was earning a real reputation. Jackson recommended Hugh Fulton, who had just sent Howard C. Hopson, of Associated Gas and Electric, to



The stately residence in Independence, Missouri, which now serves as the summer White House. It was built in the 1860's by Miss Truman's grandfather, a successful flour-miller. When Truman was courting his wife he often drove up in front in his four-cylinder 1913-model Stafford car.

*By courtesy of Life*



America's First Family: Mrs Truman, the President, and their only child, Mary Margaret, spending an evening in their plainly furnished home in Independence, during the days when Truman was a Senator from Missouri. Although Senator Truman was usually busy with official duties, he sometimes found time to take his family to the cinema, which he enjoys. As Mrs Truman explains, "He likes any movie his daughter wants to go to." However, he claims that if he gets bored during the picture he can sleep right through it. Afterwards he may tease Margaret about the actors she wanted to see, because he teases his wife and daughter at almost every opportunity.

*By courtesy of "Life"*

the Penitentiary, and was busy indicting Circuit Judge J. Warren Davis.

Fulton, in appearance, might possibly pass for a banker. The resemblance would certainly cease there. The cautious, slow-motion conservatism of banking circles is a mood wholly foreign to his disposition. He weighs about 230 pounds and is over six feet tall. His large, well-shaped hands tremble only on those rare occasions when he is fatigued or intensely annoyed. Fear is not in his make-up and his energy is nearly boundless. Coupled with his driving-power is an acute understanding of diverse problems, a talent for grasping the essential points, and a lack of patience for conclusions not grounded solidly on the facts.

Jackson brought Truman and Fulton together. Fulton had a lawyer's distaste for investigations that 'cooked' the evidence to get undue prominence in newspaper headlines; Truman wondered if the young lawyer could handle the tremendous responsibilities of a national defence investigation.

Fulton wanted to know if the Committee was going to be one more bunch of headline-hunters.

"Certainly not," said Truman.

"Then," asked Fulton, "would the Committee back its lawyer?"

"You get the facts," Truman said bluntly. "That will be all we will want. Don't show anybody any favours. We haven't any axes to grind, nor any sacred cows. If you can get the truth the Committee will stand behind you to the limit. This won't be a whitewash or a witch hunt. I'll guarantee that!"

Fulton liked the way Truman put the proposition to him. Yet there were reasons that would have made many hesitate. Here was a committee with a meagre 15,000 dollar appropriation. The chairman was virtually unknown outside the state of Missouri. Even there it was Senator Bennett Champ Clark about whom most people knew. Truman's voting record during his first term as Senator had closely

hugged the party line, and the Committee would have to criticize Administration mistakes. The other Committee members were mostly junior Senators, new to their jobs. Fulton realized that his own reputation as a prosecutor was assured in New York, with bright prospects for the future. His friends advised against joining forces with an 'unknown quantity' in Congress. If Truman's Committee missed its opportunity it would be only a minor mishap in the annals of the Senate. But such a failure might be almost disastrous to Hugh Fulton's career.

Still, Fulton liked the way Truman put the cards on the table. It was a gamble. But it was a job that had to be done. A powerful agent of Congress was urgently needed to probe the sprawling national defence programme. Only through Congress itself could an effective check be made on the use of the enormous grants of power and money which Congress had authorized.

"I'll take the job," Fulton told Truman, after he had thought it all over.

The Truman-Fulton partnership was to be productive of more good constructive soul-searching for Uncle Sam, more enlightened criticism and remedial action, than any other meeting between two men in the memory of Washington's oldest observers. Hugh Fulton went out to get the facts for Harry Truman and the Senate. He brought them in by the lorryload—statistics, blueprints, charts, confidential files, military reports, catalogues of data.

With Fulton installed, the Committee prepared to do business. Every section of the country was represented in the membership: Maine, New York, Texas, New Mexico, Missouri, Minnesota, and Washington. And as its work expanded Senators from West Virginia, Ohio, and Michigan were added.

The Truman Committee had to steer a course over many shoals, and from the beginning the members and their counsel realized that they would have to formulate policies

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designed to assure attainment of the prime objectives. These policies were never written down. Rather they evolved and became settled as time went by.

The first decision of the Committee was to be the key to much of its success. They determined that under no circumstances would the Committee constitute itself a Committee on the Conduct of the War, if war should come, as it did nine months later. Each member was versed in the history of a similar Civil War committee that injected politics and preferment into the war, drove Abraham Lincoln desperate, and harassed his generals in the field. The Truman Committee swore that it would never touch such matters as the selection of commanders, the choice or formulation of strategy, the disciplining of men, or the disposal and use of troops and munitions; and it never did.

The second decision of the Committee was almost equally important. Its members, with hard-headed horse-sense, agreed that Franklin D. Roosevelt was the Commander-in-Chief, that the third-term campaign was history, and that politics should not be allowed to discolour the Committee's work or its conclusions. This was an almost unheard-of decision for a bi-partisan committee.

Its third resolution was to constitute itself an impartial fact-finding agency open to the complaints both of government and business, and to dispense justice with as much evenhandedness as its intelligence would permit.

A fourth decision was to make such investigation meticulous and thorough, to depend upon the records and not upon hearsay and rumour. Complainants would be required to produce the record; everybody would be given his opportunity in the Committee court. There would be no unwarranted, vicious attacks either on business or government bureaux, and no truckling to any man or agency, public or private.

The Committee, with Fulton organizing the staff and guiding its efforts, kept its pledges magnificently. It went



after facts and ever more facts. It obtained some of the most secret memoranda from the War Production Board, Army, and Navy files. It took, in secret sessions, production figures on guns, ships, steel and aluminium, reports on submarine sinkings, convoy losses, and other data loaded with dynamite. In four years no real national defence secret has leaked from the Committee, although it has been a walking library of military and home-front confidences.

The Committee, which since the summer of 1944 has been under the chairmanship of Senator James M. Mead, of New York, has issued thirty-five reports, all unanimous. It has heard some eight hundred witnesses in open sessions, and nine hundred more behind locked doors. It has taken about seventy thousand pages of testimony—enough to fill a twelve-foot shelf. Its files bulge with information that cannot be published until some time in the future.

In 1944 officials of the Archives of the United States conducted a special survey of the Committee's files. Rows of cabinets filled with Committee information were already lined up in the Archives Building in Constitution Avenue. At the last count the Committee files had been catalogued under nearly fifty thousand headings covering the minutest matters pertaining to America's war effort.

Two or more members of the Committee visited every national defence plant of any size in the country. Truman estimates that he himself travelled more than thirty thousand miles on Committee business, checking production, labour troubles, waste, and improper practices. The Committee received sometimes as many as two hundred tips a week by correspondence, has discarded nothing that appeared to bear possibilities of turning up faulty production, laziness, or malicious mismanagement.

Business-men quickly learned that here was one agency of the Government which was always ready to hear both sides of any disagreement, to give both an equal chance, to consider all explanations, and get to the very bottom of any tangled

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controversy. This court was always open, eager for business, hungry for the facts, itching to speed up the war effort. Government agencies soon realized that the Committee stood for ever over them like a stern but indulgent parent, a bouquet in one hand if deserved, a birch rod in the other if had to be that. But it also had a strain of tolerance. It did not nag or take a high moral tone.

When Andrew Jackson Higgins of New Orleans wanted to build landing-boats and found himself stopped by official indifference he obtained a hearing from the Truman Committee, and this resulted in an investigation and the awarding of a Navy contract.

When a construction company put up some patchwork defence housing at Winfield Park, New Jersey, and made a poor attempt at the construction of concrete barges the Truman Committee investigated. The evidence was later turned over to the Department of Justice, and jury indictments followed. When steel tests at the Irvin works of the Carnegie-Illinois Steel Company were faked and falsified the Truman Committee, advised by a disillusioned employee, went to work, and Company officials admitted the faking and stopped the practice. When defective aeroplane engines were passed at the Lockland (Ohio) plant of Curtiss-Wright the Committee forced correction, and the Army officers who were responsible were court-martialled.

Inventors with ideas of merit found a ready audience with the Committee. When Sikorsky's helicopter was given only passing consideration by the Navy the Truman Committee studied its possibilities and criticized the Navy for its lack of imagination in not using this novel flying-machine. There were dozens of other cases not reported in the Press. About the year 1942, an ex-football coach appealed to the Committee. He had run into a stone wall of official indifference and red tape. He had devised a crude means of firing a rocket projectile and had experimented at great personal risk. He had fired his missile for considerable distances and was

convinced that, with the right laboratory facilities, it could be improved to fire hundreds of miles. The Committee made judicious inquiries, and within a few weeks the ex-coach wrote and thanked the Committee, stating that he was getting all the co-operation he needed. This was long before flying-bombs and rockets were showering destruction on Britain.

After months of fruitless effort in Washington a small California boat-builder, with Committee help, obtained a Navy experimental contract to build lifesaving-rafts made of cork and wood, which he designed to be dropped from the bays of bombers.

Whenever these smaller matters came up the Committee simply asked itself, "Will it help win the war?" If not it was quickly cast aside. If it appeared to have merit the Committee could not and would not stand in technical judgment, but it did insist on a fair appraisal by the agencies having jurisdiction. Many of the cases came from those seeking special privilege, or from the disgruntled. Many others were just plain crazy ideas. One proposal advocated that every soldier in the United States Army be supplied with a single-seater aeroplane into which would be shovelled a "few square yards of good American soil." This vast armada would then take off, fly over Tokyo, dump the earth, and thus bury Japan in defeat.

Another suggestion involved building two huge steel spheres three times the size of the Capitol dome. Great pointed spikes would stick out all over the surface. They could travel on land or sea, and inside were to be huge motors and a complicated system of stabilizers and gyroscopes to prevent the large crews from turning upside down. These steel balls would cost fifty million dollars apiece, but, as the inventor said, "They could roll against the enemy, chewing up armies and cities like a meat grinder. Just two of them could stop the war in no time."

The Committee has had its disagreements with the Navy

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Department, with the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, with Army authorities, with dozens of national defence contractors, and with rampageous John L. Lewis. It never came off second best in the public's opinion.

Within four months after it was organized—on June 26, 1941—the Committee made its first report to the Senate. It had made an exhaustive investigation of United States aluminium production balanced against the then current and future needs. As it was to do so many times after that, the Committee pounded away at an obvious truth that was being overlooked by those planning and producing for war. The Committee stated plainly, "Modern warfare demands enormous supplies of raw materials, production facilities, and manpower. . . . For months the Defence Advisory Commission and the Office of Production Management had said that talk of a shortage (aluminium) was misleading, and *that it was unpatriotic to talk about the possibility of such a shortage.*" The report was stern and to the point; more aluminium production was a vital necessity.

The Committee kept investigating the adequacy of facilities for all basic metals, and helped the country to realize that America would need vast quantities not only of aluminium but of steel, copper, lead, zinc, magnesium, and all other basic raw materials required to build a war machine. There would also have to be machine tools and manufacturing facilities ready to fabricate those materials at maximum efficiency and with minimum expense.

Here was a Committee that did not hesitate to report the truth, that gave the people an honest account and demanded results first and explanations or excuses afterward. In this initial report the Committee served on war production managers an often repeated notice amounting to this, "We are keeping an eye on you. Never forget that. Now get out and hustle." This notice was, in effect, posted on the bulletin board of every war office, factory, and shipyard. The Committee did not attempt to substitute its judgment for that

of the agencies responsible. It would merely show up the defects and insist on correction. Its power of prevention by possible exposure became enormous.

Many involved or over-simplified explanations for the success of the Committee have been advanced. Actually, hard work, team-work, intelligence, and luck did the job.

The power the Committee was given in its resolution, in itself, was meaningless. Many Congressional committees have had wide powers and accomplished little. The Truman Committee won its power not by the words of its charter but by the prestige it gained by the careful work of Truman, the other members, Fulton, and the staff. And this involved the maintenance of three separate reputations. First, the Committee needed the help and trust of the Senate. At any time the Senate could disband it by refusing to grant additional funds or could curb its powers by limiting its jurisdiction. Second, the Committee needed the assistance and admiration of the ever-vigilant American Press, which, if it turned on the Committee, could arouse public sentiment against its work. Third, the Committee had to have the respect of the governmental agencies and departments. If these were given any basis at all on which to protest unfair treatment or to claim hampering of their work, it was obvious that they would do so, and thereby throw shadows of doubt upon the Committee's motives.

In the beginning Congress took little interest in the Committee, and most of the members gave it but passing attention—a situation that was natural and to be expected. Senators normally serve on three or four important committees, and some of the Truman Committee members, like Mead, had to ration their attention and energies between half a dozen other committee assignments. Mead, for example, also had to conduct Washington business for a constituency numbering thirteen million in his home state of New York. Senator Tom Connally, of Texas, was engrossed in his work as chairman of the vitally important Foreign Relations

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Committee, besides serving on the important Judiciary and Finance Committees. Truman himself was loaded up with the Military Affairs, Appropriations, and Interstate Commerce Committees.

From these regular committees the departments and bureaux were seeking money, authority, power, and privilege. There was a constant flow of Bills into committee hoppers, and little time to dig through the mountainous piles of information and memoranda. Tangled up in the committees of the United States Senate are all the vast and intricate problems of complicated and often frustrated government in a great modern democracy. Here in these committees the Senator sweats out his reputation among his colleagues. It was into this spiderweb setting that Senator Truman had to run the circuit of his Committee's work.

It was here that Harry Truman, the Junior Senator from Missouri, showed his ability at quiet, effective diplomacy and administrative skill. He had shown that he had done a careful job in the railways investigation, and he could now count personal friends among his colleagues. He now made it clear to them that his Committee's work would not reflect the image of the chairman and was in no sense a closed corporation. Any Senator was welcome to present cases for investigation, provided they did not involve politics, and his advice and counsel would be welcome. It was a committee of the whole Senate, Truman told them—to keep it informed and to recommend action. This was an unusual way for a committee chairman to talk. But many of the Senators now knew Harry Truman and liked him. They were ready to help him in any way they could.

To the members of the Committee itself he emphasized that this was to be a composite job. They were all to work together without fanfare or jealousies. The serious task they were doing was the important thing. Truman realized that, being chairman, he would automatically figure prominently in the Committee's work. And he knew, also, that his name

fitted neatly into a headline. But Truman, as the fame of the Committee spread, never sought the limelight. Instead he always insisted that the credit was due to the members and to the staff. Truman suffused his personality and his position as chairman so that the name Truman Committee, known in nearly every household, became associated not with one man but with an impartial fact-finding Government group that worked diligently at its job of checking up on the war effort.

Truman instructed Hugh Fulton to find his own staff of investigators and get reliable and competent men. Although qualified persons were then hard to find, in a few months Fulton had rounded up about a dozen. This was enough, since a small staff avoided the accumulation of administrative and personnel problems and also made it easier for Fulton to keep acquainted with each man's work. He selected his assistants solely on their qualifications, and never once inquired into an applicant's political views. For the most part they were younger men with the stamina and energy to stand the strain of emergencies and the gruelling hours which often involved working late into the night and on Sundays. They were also men virtually free of prejudices, outside interests, or preconceived notions. Most staff members had legal or accounting training and broad enough backgrounds in education or experience to enable them to tackle any assignment, grasp the subject-matter quickly, take the case apart, and find the trouble. They had to know how to get the information needed without being stalled or side-stepped. Fulton expected his men to be courteous but not to take 'no' for an answer and not to come running back for authority. Yet, if necessary, records or witnesses could always be produced by issuing a Senate subpoena. The Committee personnel was completed by engaging about fifteen typist-secretaries, a filing-clerk, and an office-boy.

With respect to the handling of the Press, Truman laid down a few simple rules. Under no circumstances were there

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to be smearing campaigns or publicity stunts. "We will give the Press the facts," Truman said, "and let the facts speak for themselves." Every courtesy and help was to be extended to reporters, and within security limits, full disclosures would be made promptly, but not until all the evidence was in. News announcements would be given to the entire Press at the same time through the Senate Press Gallery, with no favouritism shown or 'inside stories' passed along. Lengthy reports would be submitted for study several days in advance of submission, and release hours alternated to accommodate both the morning and afternoon papers. The Committee always enjoyed excellent Press relations. In turn the American Press did, on the whole, report the work of the Committee fairly, accurately, and in considerable detail. In addition many valuable tips were given to the Committee by observant correspondents themselves.

With the staff organized and the Committee members agreed on their attitude and aims, methods of operation were devised. The Committee attempted to keep the entire production programme worked out for eight months ahead; where would things be then? This knowledge could be gained by concentrating on apparent or developing weaknesses, and yet bearing in mind the evolutionary course the programme seemed to be taking at the moment. For evidence the Committee went to the actual records in Government files and extracted endless masses of data, then sent investigators or sub-committees into the field to do the same with war plants, shipyards, or Army and Navy installations. After sifting all the evidence the Committee staff would brief the particular case and submit its confidential report to the Committee members. After allowing time for the Senators to consider it Truman would then call a meeting of the Committee in the 'Doghouse.'



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### *War Record*

HARRY'S 'Doghouse' was a room that became famous in Washington. A door to the right of Senator Truman's desk led into it—a room with high ceilings, ample lighting, several small writing-desks, a low coffee-table, black leather easy chairs, and a couch. The white walls were covered with autographed pictures given to Senator Truman from hundreds of his friends of high and low station in life. One wall was adorned with dozens of original newspaper cartoons sent to the Senator by the artists. A side wall was covered with the red-marked field artillery maps that had belonged to old Battery D. And hanging in the corner were a series of prints showing the history of aviation from the Wright brothers' first plane down to the B-17 Bomber.

Here, in this private office, the Committee threshed out its problems, planned its strategy, and settled policy questions. Reports would be discussed, with each member submitting his suggested changes. These would all be carefully carried over on to a master draft to be returned to the staff for expansion, deletions, or corrections. On major reports often as many as five such drafts would be prepared before agreement was reached. As was to be expected, some members often felt that the criticism was harsh or unfair, others that it was too mild. But always they agreed on the conclusions and recommendations that were finally approved. There was a guiding truth that made this possible—there is no substitute for a fact, and if all the facts on a given situation

are at hand reasonable men will not disagree on conclusions ; these will take care of themselves.

The final stage of the report's journey to the Senate floor involved submitting it, or the pertinent sections, on a confidential basis, to those agencies and individuals affected by its contents. Liaison officers of the agencies, or the principals themselves, would arrive in the Committee offices and offer rebuttal. Corporation executives wrote, telephoned, and came in person to soften facts, all of which were closely rechecked by Fulton and the staff. All conclusions were reconsidered before final adoption. But the Committee would never modify its conclusions or recommendations unless the facts showed that a change was justified. If there was still objection the Committee would politely offer to hold an open hearing and accord opportunity to prove the objections in public. Few ever availed themselves of this invitation.

It was also in the 'Doghouse' that admirals, generals, factory managers, and Cabinet members met in informal conferences and talked to Committee members 'off the record.' Despite some fears of the military, no war secret ever leaked out, and the Committee with an evenhanded insistence invariably got the whole truth and nothing short of it.

'Harry's Doghouse' was almost a Washington institution before the Committee was two years old, and many of the nation's greatest problems were settled there. When Donald Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, showed signs of hesitancy in his arguments with the Army and Navy it was in 'Harry's Doghouse' that the Committee told Nelson to stand up and insist that the civilian managers run the war production programme.

Following its disclosures on aluminium, other Committee reports followed in rapid succession as the Committee got its teeth into the war production job, learned its lessons, and memorized the picture in its broader aspects.

It was on December 7, 1941, that the Committee was put to its severest test. It was preparing its first annual report

filled with criticism of the defence effort. But the sickening shock of the attack on Pearl Harbour caused many in Congress to say openly that it was time for the Truman Committee to wind up its offices and turn back its authority. The twelve investigators and the typists and clerks began wondering about new jobs.

For three days the Committee talked it over, then issued a statement in the form of a report: it was going to stay on the job; it had never investigated, and still believed it should not investigate, military and naval strategy or tactics.

It would struggle, the Committee stated, to see that victory was not delayed "weeks or months" by failure to produce weapons and goods in the desired volume. The Committee knew that its work had whipped up new energies and efforts in those managing the war effort, that "it is necessary to continue a constant watch for the purpose that (war) problems are met head-on and solved."

The historian may well date the beginning of all-out effort for total war from the Committee's first annual report which was issued about five weeks after the Pearl Harbour attack. President Roosevelt had set up S.P.A.B. (Supply Priorities and Allocations Board) over O.P.M. (Office of Production Management). Defence production was disorganized, and a generally, indecisive chaos pervaded the industrial mobilization programme.

The Truman Committee drafted 190 pages of scathing criticism and sent them quietly to the President, advising him that the report would be made public in a few days. Before this could be done Mr Roosevelt abolished S.P.A.B. and set up the War Production Board, with Donald Nelson as its single manager. The Committee had urged the necessity of concentrating "authority in one head."

It was on a cold January day that Senator Truman took the Senate floor to submit this historic document. Standing up straight behind his desk in the back row, he adjusted his spectacles and occasionally tugged at a button on the coat

of his grey suit. As he read a summarized account of the Committee's findings his voice was almost inaudible. He spoke rapidly. It was not a dramatic presentation, but Senators on both sides of the nearly empty chamber began to move over to where Truman was standing. Small groups crowded round to hear every word. Already the electric news typewriters in the Senate Press Gallery were pounding out the story for the afternoon editions. It took real courage to deliver this report. Every one sensed that. And Truman, the loyal Democrat, well realized the implications.

But he knew and believed every word in the forthright document lying by the little sand-box on his Senate desk. The facts could not be denied. They were complete and fully documented.

Truman read on. The Committee demanded immediate conversion of America's gigantic motor-car industry to war production, the construction of West Coast steel plants, drastic expansion of the machine-tool programme, better aeroplane models and more of them, review of defence contracts, better correlation and management of defence housing. It disclosed growing shortages in copper, lead, zinc, magnesium, and steel, and demanded action of the managers of those production programmes. In plain language it gave warning of the huge job ahead and reiterated its own realistic stand.

The fact that the entire future of the nation is at stake makes it imperative that there should be a constant check to ascertain that the programme is actually being carried out efficiently, economically, and fairly, so that the necessary sacrifices are apportioned to all, without favouritism.

Inefficiency and self-interest have always existed. And the haste and confusion incident to war must be expected to stimulate rather than eliminate this tendency, despite the patriotic desire to win the war.

This first annual report was virtually a doctor's chart of national defence ailments, with extensively prescribed remedies, most of which were promptly adopted.

After its first year of work the Committee issued reports with almost monthly regularity. It branched out into manifold investigations of inefficiency, inter-departmental breakdowns, the performance of finished machines, and the general management of the war effort. In the years to follow it was to formulate many a cardinal principle. On the spreading out of contracts to include the smaller and intermediate-sized businesses it said :

We must bear in mind that even if defence were our only objective, instead of just our principal objective, we would need a sound, healthy civilian economy to support our defence programme. . . . Great care must be taken to assure that we do not destroy the American way of life by adopting wrong methods of defending it.

With respect to labour in general and John L. Lewis in particular it stated :

The obligation which rests upon Lewis [not to strike] is not an obligation arising by contract with the President. It is an obligation to the United States arising out of the war emergency. It is based upon his duty as a citizen to a country which enabled him to exchange the sweat and physical toil of a miner for the comforts and privileges of a labour executive. . . . No citizen has the right to jeopardize the nation's existence in wartime.

On quarrels within the Government it stated bluntly :

The influence from above must always be towards unity. Where necessary heads must be knocked together. . . . Destructive, wasteful feuding must be suppressed.

On manpower :

Compulsion in this field should be the very last resort in a democracy such as ours . . . the real strength of any programme will always rest on patriotic, voluntary co-operation in making it effective. But it is futile to appeal for that kind of co-operation until a programme is formulated.

On farm machinery :

Farm machines are the 'machine tools' of agriculture. An

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adequate supply is vital to maintain an increased food production. Before weapons can be produced or used we must first have food.

On shipping losses in the early years of the war :

Ship losses by submarine action have been heavy but . . . not disastrous. German propaganda announcements that these sinkings are winning the war for Germany are not true. However, our own hush-hush policy has given credence to such propaganda. Certainty is always better than rumour. Frankness is the best answer to propaganda.

On dollar-a-year men (persons holding government positions with nominal salaries of one dollar a year) :

The Committee believes that most dollar-a-year-men . . . are honest and conscientious, and that they would not intentionally favour big business . . . [but] no man can honestly serve two masters.

On reconversion from war production :

*Even in wartime it was the flow of private initiative that made possible the success of the war programme. It is the job of government to devise rules of the road but not to tell the driver where he must travel.*

On cartel agreements :

Such arrangements are harmful in peace time, but disastrous in time of war.

It is impossible to assess the accomplishments of the Committee in terms of dollars and cents, and the Committee claims no over-all saving in money. Thoughtful persons have estimated between four and six billion dollars, and it has been reported that by its work the Committee indirectly prevented the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives. The camp construction investigation alone, which Senator Truman started the day he drove out to Fort Leonard Wood, is said to have saved the American taxpayer a quarter of a billion dollars. This can be compared to the little more than 500,000

dollars that the Committee spent in over four years of operation. Most of this went for salaries.

The Committee's record is due not to the genius of one man, but to the combined efforts of a group. Under Harry Truman's leadership each man felt personally responsible for the Committee's success and reputation. They liked their chairman, and he rarely made a decision without first consulting with both the Democratic and Republican members. He learned to lean upon and trust the advice of the Republican Senators Owen Brewster, of Maine, Harold H. Burton, of Ohio, Homer Ferguson, of Michigan, and Joseph H. Ball, of Minnesota. In addition to Truman the Democrats were Senators Tom Connally, of Texas, James M. Mead, of New York, Carl A. Hatch, of New Mexico, Harley M. Kilgore, of West Virginia, and Mon C. Wallgren, of Washington.

All the Committee members pulled their weight in the traces, though some worked far beyond the limits of their assignments. One of these was Senator Wallgren, a former Congressman, and now Governor of the State of Washington. He was the influencing force behind many of the Committee's most important inquiries. Unhesitatingly he pointed to the defects in the aircraft programme. It was his farsightedness that concentrated attention on the need for evolving new uses and processes for magnesium, aluminium, and other light metals. His genial nature often resolved Committee disagreements by smoothing over ruffled feelings and paving the way for diplomatic compromises. Truman and Wallgren became close personal friends and travelled thousands of miles together on Committee investigations.

Harley M. Kilgore was another member and friend of Truman's, who always managed to find time for the Committee. A former judge and an intense worker, Kilgore devoted his energies to manpower and steel production problems. He could predict shortages long before they occurred. Frequently it would be Truman, Wallgren, and Kilgore who would gather in 'The Doghouse' to map out the direction

of the Committee's work. Senator Mead would join them whenever he could untangle himself from the worrying burden of his many Senate duties. Mead, like Truman, is a 'self-made man.' He started out as a switchman on the Erie Railroad, worked his way up to Congressman, and was finally elected to represent New York in the Senate with a 400,000 majority. Mead, the Committee's present chairman, was a mainstay under Truman.

In the Republican ranks it was Owen Brewster, one of the most astute and aggressive men in the Senate, who gave unsparingly of his talents to Committee affairs. Being a shrewd lawyer, Brewster supplied much of the balance and circumspection that characterized the Committee's decisions.

Homer Ferguson, although he was not elected to the Senate until 1942, fitted the Committee's hand like a glove. Ferguson had made a national reputation by his investigations and prosecutions as a circuit judge in Wayne County, Michigan. The Truman Committee served to bring out his full capabilities. He worked late at night poring over Committee evidence. He is a careful analyst, and rates as the ablest cross-examiner on Capitol Hill.

Like Truman, most of the other Committee members had served in the last war, or else had sons in the armed forces. In addition all had internationalist leanings.

Few persons realize it, but the well-known B2H2 (Ball, Burton, Hatch, Hill) resolution proposing immediate and concrete action to establish an international post-war peace organization was first projected at a luncheon which Harry Truman gave for his close friends in the Senate lunch-room, immediately below the chamber.

After the Senators had eaten a hearty meal Truman said plainly that he thought the time had arrived for the United States to move directly towards international collaboration. He sketched the outline of the plan he had in mind, establishing the Senate's intention of co-operating. The other luncheon guests fell in with the idea. They used a resolution which



Senator Ball had already drawn up, to introduce as the basis for B<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>.

They wanted Truman, as chairman of the Committee, to sponsor the proposal. He declined. It would be better, he said, to have himself disassociated with it. Eventually it was decided that three members of the Truman Committee—Ball, Burton, and Hatch—together with the Senate Democratic Whip, Lister Hill, of Alabama, should sponsor the resolution. This is but another example of the co-operation within the Committee due, in no small measure, to Truman's own sincerity and modesty.

It can fairly be said that the Truman Committee, with its fine record, has charted a new function of the national legislature in a government of constantly growing complexity. Seventy years ago a member of Congress could carry in his head most of the details and all of the politics of a rather rudimentary government. To-day, employing about three million persons in scores of boards and bureaux regulating in some degree, practically every waking activity of each citizen, the United States Government is one of the biggest enterprises in the world. It has outgrown the stage where policies and detailed operations can be fixed by congressional debate. Congress, which once laid down policies and regulated them in detail, at best must be content with drawing the major boundaries, and activating policy with appropriations. Yet Congress is still the board of directors. It can demand an accounting at any time. The Truman Committee has set an example. It fixed no policies and did not regulate. But by intelligently using its investigative powers and by gathering facts on detailed operations it operated as the efficiency expert of the American people.

It was with this in mind that Senator Truman, nominee for Vice-President, on August 7, 1944, got up to address the Senate for the last time as chairman of the Committee. He had sent a letter of resignation to Vice-President Wallace, the president of the Senate, a few days before, saying,

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It is one of the regrets of my life that this had to be done. But frankly, under the present circumstances, I am of the opinion that any statement, hearing, or report for which I would be responsible would be considered by many to have been motivated by political considerations.

As he stood before the Senate he was not happy that his days as chairman were over. He did not want to leave the Committee.

Now he was making his last report :

The work of this Committee has demonstrated what can be accomplished through an investigation by a committee of the Congress. . . . An informed Congress is a wise Congress, and an uninformed Congress surely will forfeit a large portion of the respect and confidence of the people. . . . The accomplishments of the Truman Committee (and I am referring now to the other members of the Committee and to its staff rather than just to myself) present an example of the results that can be obtained by making a factual investigation with a good staff. . . . The cost of a good investigation is negligible when compared with the results that can be obtained.

Truman proceeded to wish every success to the new chairman, Senator James M. Mead, of New York. Then he praised the achievements of the individual members. He reviewed the work of Hugh Fulton as counsel and mentioned each staff member by name.

When Truman had finished his friend Carl Hatch rose to pay a personal tribute to the chairman. In concluding he said, "He has led, but has never driven. He has been wise, kindly, firm, and courageous. Whatever the Truman Committee has accomplished, Mr President, is but a reflection of the integrity, wisdom, and courage of the chairman, Honourable Harry S. Truman, the Junior Senator from Missouri."

The late President Roosevelt was at one time inclined to take the Committee's reports lightly. Later he told Truman that the Committee was doing a constructive and helpful job and that he hoped it would persevere in its work.

And in a campaign speech at Shibe Park, Philadelphia, on October 27, 1944, President Roosevelt had this to say :

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. . . We have constantly investigated and publicized our whole management of the war effort. I call particular attention to the thorough and painstaking and completely non-partisan work of that Committee of the Senate which was organized and presided over by Harry Truman. The Truman Committee has done a job which will live in history as an example of honest, efficient government at work.

It was the Truman Committee that made Harry Truman the logical choice for Vice-President. Yet he did not seek this higher office, nor the greater role he was soon to play in American history.

## CHAPTER NINE

### *The Man*

HARRY TRUMAN'S features are sharply delineated, although he once remarked, "I look just like any other fifty people you meet in the street!" He stands five feet, eight and three-quarter inches tall. His waist-line measures thirty-four inches. His shoulders are erect and square. Vigorous walking is the only exercise he thoroughly enjoys—he does it in the regulation army step of thirty inches, a hundred and twenty steps to the minute. He weighs a hundred and sixty-five pounds, having lost five pounds before he became President.

His hair, which has receded slightly, is steel grey, and he parts it on the left side, then brushes it back and down, a little to the right. His friendly hazel eyes, well spaced at each side of the bridge of his aquiline nose, gather up genial crows' feet when he laughs. Sometimes he adjusts his thick-lensed spectacles with a quick motion of his hands. He shaves himself with a safety-razor, and when the blade is blunt he removes it from the holder and strops it expertly in the palm of his left hand without cutting himself.

Truman's health is excellent and was pronounced so by Dr George W. Calver, the Congressional physician, less than two months before he entered the White House. Blood-pressure, respiration, and heart registered normal, and his reflexes were normal.

His faculty for easy, untroubled sleep permits him to slumber soundly within fifteen minutes after retiring. He

can lie down during the day, take a fifteen- or twenty-minute nap, and waken thoroughly refreshed, his energy restored, and ready to resume his work.

Since he joined the Baptist Church in Grandview at the age of eighteen he has maintained an unbroken membership there. He does not talk much of his spiritual thoughts, but he is a deeply religious man. His grandfather, Anderson Truman, used to say, "When I hear a man pray too loudly in public I always go home and lock up the smoke-house." Truman holds something of the same opinion—that little religion accompanies a great outward show of devoutness. He says often, "I have always believed that religion is something to live by and not to talk about." Truman does not advertise his faith, but he sincerely believes in God and asks His help.

His favourite dress is a grey or a brown double-breasted suit, soft white shirt, and bow-tie—preferably blue with white polka dots. He feels somewhat conspicuous in evening clothes, but he wears them with the same effortless ease that he has acquired in wearing business suits. He keeps all his clothes until they start to fray at the edges. His suits are always pressed and his shoes carefully brushed. The habit of being casual and neat in his appearance was formed, no doubt, in the days when he ran the haberdashery business with Eddie Jacobson in Kansas City.

Truman does not smoke, but he enjoys good bourbon whisky. He keeps a small stock in hand and takes a drink sparingly. The refrigerator in 'The Doghouse' in the Senate Office Building usually contained a fifth of bourbon, a bottle of Scotch, and often a quart of Southern Comfort—that chain-lightning drink invented out in St Louis in the steam-boating days on the muddy Mississippi. Truman prefers ginger ale with his whisky, or plain 'branch water.' He consumes up to two drinks, then calls a halt. This rule is strict and inflexible—two drinks and no more.

When Jack Garner, of Texas, was Vice-President Truman

served as a member of Garner's 'Board of Education.' The 'Board' would sometimes meet "to strike a blow for liberty" with clinking glasses. Upon occasion, when Senate deliberations were over, the rugged, white-haired Texan, Truman, and two or three other Senators would gather in Garner's office. 'Cactus' Jack would look at the clock and exclaim with ceremony, "Somewhere it's twelve o'clock. It's time to strike a blow for liberty!" It was a simple ritual and put men on their ease. It solidified friendship and fostered understanding. There were four quiet years when abstainer Henry Wallace was Vice-President, but when Truman became presiding officer of the Senate the "blow for liberty" was struck again.

The working schedule of Harry Truman has always been rigorous—a throw-back to farm days, when he arose at day-break to get about his sowing and harvesting. As Senator he foiled his office staff by arriving at 8.30 in the morning, having been up since 6.30, his regular rising hour. As Senator he would dress and then read quickly through the newspapers while Mrs Truman prepared breakfast. By the time he was ready to leave for the Capitol he would be familiar with the featured accounts in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. Later on, after the late mail delivery, he would catch up on the Missouri newspapers.

President Truman arrives at his White House desk at 8.30 A.M. Before his administration was a week old the White House reporters, who found their lives seriously disturbed by such early rising, complained to Truman's military aide, hard-boiled Colonel (now Brigadier-General) Harry Vaughan, who served in an adjoining regiment in the last war.

"How long is this going to continue?" the reporters asked hopefully.

"Don't be disturbed, boys," Vaughan replied airily. "I know the President. He'll let down one of these days. He won't come in until eight forty-five!"

President Truman keeps farmers' hours, and his routine of appointments is brisk and business-like. He realizes that in the most crucial days in America's history he must learn the hardest job in the world, and he proceeds with the precision of a stop-watch. The appointment is usually for fifteen minutes and it ends in fifteen minutes. This applies to the high and the low.

As Senator, Truman often left the office as late as eight or nine in the evening. Frequently he drove his own car, and it was not an uncommon sight to see him whisking along Constitution Avenue in his light grey Chrysler sedan, with the side window down and the wind blowing his hair. He would cut over to Connecticut Avenue, and then on out to his modest five-room apartment at Number 4701. More often he would catch a trolley from the Senate Office Building and then transfer to the Chevy Chase bus, which took him to his door.

Invariably Senator Truman carried home two or three manila envelopes filled with Senate hearings, unsigned mail, or Investigating Committee data. After supper, when the dishes were dried, he would spread these out on the dining-room table. He and Mrs Truman would work together until about eleven o'clock, when the Senator usually retired.

Truman has a habit of reading in bed until he falls asleep. He keeps a small table with three or four volumes handy, and switches from one to the other with ease—without any lapses or tangled memory.

For breakfast Truman likes oatmeal, orange juice, toast, and a glass of milk. At lunch he prefers some sort of fish, a tossed salad, a dish of figs with cream, and cold milk. For dinner he looks forward to steak—when he can get it—potatoes, salad, ice-cream or apple-pie, and, on rare occasions, a cup of coffee. He eats heartily and almost anything on the menu, but not heavily. He functions better when he is "just a little hungry." Truman is not a gourmet; he likes plain foods best—the kind to be found on a Missouri farm.

Truman is mild-mannered and intensely modest, but in his public and private life he observes an almost painful rectitude. As Vice-President he was on one occasion embarrassed at the National Press Club when he performed at the piano for service men and members of the Washington Press corps. The shapely film actress, Lauren Bacall, was in the room, and was helped up to a perch on top of the upright piano. She crossed her legs and gazed down moodily as the Vice-President played. After a few minutes Truman, sensing a publicity picture being staged, turned quickly and looked directly into the battery of flashlight cameras. Some newspapers described Truman as looking into the "sulphurous eyes" of the actress, but the photograph clearly shows him looking away at the time.

Truman never went out with but one girl in his life—his wife, Bess Wallace. And he loves her with a deep and abiding devotion. Being a seasoned political campaigner, Truman is inured to invective, smears, and partisan distortions. But he is thin-skinned regarding any criticism of Mrs Truman. If, in the years ahead, waggery or petty gossip touches the First Lady it will hurt the President deeply.

The President and the First Lady call each other "Mother" and "Father," and the President refers endearingly to his ninety-three-year-old mother as "Mummy." "Mummy" appears not to be awed by her son's ascendancy to the White House; she writes regularly to give him a 'piece of her mind' just as she did when he was Senator and she called him to task for not reporting for a roll-call. Truman dutifully answers his mother's letters whenever he has a free moment, though he spares her any undue excitement. She would have enjoyed coming to Washington for the fourth-term inaugural, but Truman opposed the idea. Recently, when the excitement had subsided, he permitted her to come to the White House for a visit.

Truman's relaxations are few and simple. He gets his only physical exercise by walking. He has never played



tennis in his life, and says he's "not old enough yet to take up golf." He claims he can cook—"but I've never seen him do it," says Mrs Truman. He loves to drive a car, and it is safe to predict that as President he will take the steering-wheel whenever he gets the chance. The fact that Secret Service men now trail him and carry out advance patrols wherever he may be is a source of intense irritation. He regrets the need for the alert precautions the Secret Service must take to protect his life, and the iron rigidity with which they circumscribe his every movement.

When he was presiding officer of the Senate some weeks before the death of Franklin Roosevelt Truman noticed that the driver of his Vice-Presidential car was accompanied by a stranger every morning. Truman thought the driver was carrying a friend to and from work and one day asked about it.

"He's no friend of mine. He's a Secret Service man," the driver replied.

"Well, why is he following me around?" the Vice-President exploded. "Nobody's going to hurt me." But he realized then that his protection had become a matter of official concern.

President Truman does not enjoy playing bridge. He reasons that a good bridge-player should know from the dummy and from the bidding just about what cards everyone holds. "And what's the fun in that?" he asks.

But a game of chance appeals to him. During the Vice-Presidential campaign Truman was asked if he could play poker. "Don't know," he replied, with his tongue in his cheek. "I have played a game where you put the first card face down and the others face up. Then everybody bets and you turn your hole card up and somebody takes the money."

Truman is a shrewd and cautious poker-player, and he still likes to recall the time he took fifty dollars from Vice-President Garner, who enjoyed an almost fabulous reputa-

tion at the small-stakes table. Actually Truman confines himself to a twenty-five cent limit. He is too thrifty to go higher. His conversation over the poker chips is racy, witty, and somewhat disconcerting to his opponents. He plays his cards carefully, and is not easily bluffed. He seems to have an innate sense of seeing into the mind of the player who bets one hand and holds another.

Truman has a habit, when listening to a friend, of grinning broadly and looking bashfully at the floor. His self-effacement is genuine—the plain, ‘homespun’ quality one finds in a man who credits all others, until proven otherwise, with being as straightforward and kindly as himself.

Yet he has his rough side too. His conversation, at times, is unvarnished and unpolished. He reverts, upon occasion, to the muleteer language he learned while working along the Santa Fé tracks between Sheffield and Sibley, Missouri, or to the army vocabulary of the days when he fought in the mud with his battery mates in France.

Truman has a flair for telling lively stories and jokes, and has given many a rendition with *élan* and side-splitting gusto. For years the ‘Ham and Eggs Club’ counted on him as a featured performer. This is the group that met every Wednesday in the office of the Secretary of the Senate, just off the Chamber, to munch ham sandwiches and exchange the latest Capitol gossip.

Truman reads rapidly, with a retentive memory. His is not a photographic mind but rather a thorny one that catches on to certain facts and fastens them there. Truman’s brain is not trained to grasp instantly all the fine points or shaded hues of meaning in a complicated report or problem. But unerringly he can think his way through, without hesitation, to a reasoned and common-sense judgment. This marks him as a good executive, one who does not allow the central point to escape by being clogged up with endless detail and mazes of circumlocution. Likewise, Truman delegates others to work on problems with a pick and shovel and

administer the countless and necessary particulars. This leaves him free to concentrate on the broad problems, and clears his desk for major decisions.

Truman writes with a large, almost illegible hand. Like any busy and overburdened public official he goes carefully over the drafts of speeches frequently prepared for him, but usually he does not make many changes. Again, he relies on the assistance of others and has an aptitude for picking the right man to help him on a particular task. He places trust in those he selects and allows them to exercise their own judgment and initiative.

Truman's voice is soft and well-modulated, with a slightly nasal, Mid-Western twang. During his campaigning for Vice-President those around him worried that his throat might grow hoarse from so many public utterances. But at the end of a 7500-mile tour round the nation Truman's voice retained the same pitch and resonance that it had demonstrated at the start.

Like most Americans, especially those in political life, Truman speaks in an easy-going, almost breezy manner. He writes, on the other hand, in stiffer, more formal language, giving greater form and substance to his utterances. His inner thoughts and convictions are rarely expressed at all.

Truman is at best only a mediocre speaker. But what he lacks in oratorical skill and fibre he makes up in comforting sincerity that does not fail to reach his audience. He usually reads speeches in a hurried, laboured manner, sometimes tripping over some of his words. He has taken instruction in speech delivery and has improved greatly, so that he has slowed down and learned to emphasize certain passages more rhythmically.

President Truman lacks entirely the broad education and culture of his predecessor. He keenly regrets that he never went to college. He wanted a university education, but there was too much work to do and he could not afford it. He has often remarked, "I wish I had had a college education. I

might have accomplished something better. I feel a terrible inadequacy of education."

President Truman's hands are medium-sized, well-thatched with brownish hair, and slightly freckled. His handshake is warm and firm, but often he salutes his friends in military fashion, as he does not enjoy the role of glad-hander.

Soon after he became Vice-President he attended a White House function where Mrs Roosevelt invited him to stand with her and Mrs Truman on the receiving line.

"Where's the boss?" Truman whispered to the First Lady.

"I think he retired to his study about a half hour ago," Mrs Roosevelt replied.

Truman took one look at the long queue of guests. "That's just where I'm going," he said, "if you will be good enough to excuse me."

Thereafter boisterous roars echoed down the White House stairs as Truman regaled the President with stories of the farm, of Capitol Hill, and of the old days on the railway construction gang.

Harry Truman does not forget a friend. When, on January 26, 1945, Truman learned of the death of Tom Pendergast, he decided to attend the funeral services in Kansas City.

Some of Truman's associates advised against it. The political repercussions, they thought, might be embarrassing and unsavoury. After all, they reasoned, Pendergast was dead, and he could not appreciate it personally. And the public would not understand the Vice-President of the United States attending the funeral of a convicted felon.

"He was my friend, wasn't he?" Truman asked tersely. "He never turned on me. And I didn't turn on him when the papers demanded that I denounce him. I'm going." He did go. He flew to Kansas City and walked bare-headed in the funeral cortège, and then returned to Washington. The public understood. Truman received only a few letters of censure, and hundreds approved of this final gesture to a

departed friend. It is not unfair to say that Truman, when he boarded the plane, did not care what people would think. He would have gone even if the disapproval had been universal.

Not long before Truman became President he was advised that a friend's son had been killed in the Pacific. He telephoned the man out in a mid-western town and said, "This is Harry Truman." There was a long pause—so long that the man thought the connexion had been broken. Then came Truman's voice again, "Oh, I guess I'm just a plain darned fool." His heart was full of words that his tongue could not speak to this man whose son had given his life for his country.

Truman is a man whose stature grows by knowing him. Almost invariably the impression gained by those who meet him the first time is that he is genial and colourless and little more. Harry Truman does lack colour and glamour as we know these to-day, but measured in terms of knowledge of men and their deeds, in moments of self-reliance, of humbleness, devotion, and tolerance, he epitomizes the charm and strength of Main Street, U.S.A.

Beneath the surface of this meek man runs a vein of implacable will and resolution. He attempts consciously to avoid basing his decision on prejudice or bias. He listens to diverse arguments and values all shades of opinion, respecting each man's views; and then comes to his own conclusion. Once this is cemented into firm conviction it cannot be hammered loose. Here is the man who likes and trusts almost everybody, who is casual and almost indifferent to some things, yet perceives the truth, holds it in his fist, and if it really matters to him will not let go. This is the paradox of Harry Truman's personality and is a fundamental fact of his character.

It was this that enabled Truman to maintain harmony and balance as chairman of the bi-partisan War Investigating Committee. It largely explains why, in more than three

eventful years, with its often being necessary to criticize severely the Administration, there was never a minority report.

One class of opinion in Washington was inclined to give credit for Truman's work on the Investigating Committee to Hugh Fulton, the Chief Counsel. Nothing could be more unfair to both men. Fulton and the President are personal friends and work well together. Truman has often voiced his high opinion of Fulton's work. And Fulton has repeatedly emphasized that the Committee's success while Truman was chairman would not have been possible without Truman's guidance and inspired leadership.

As general counsel to the Committee, Fulton made an outstanding record. His ability at putting together facts, in incisive examination of witnesses, and in directing his small staff of investigators, will be recognized years hence when historians bring the war years into focus. Fulton's recommendations were generally accepted by Truman. But Fulton limited his recommendations to matters he was working on. Truman determined the policies and Fulton simply carried them out. They rarely had differences. When they did Truman did not hesitate to overrule Fulton.

One such occasion came just after Truman's nomination for the Vice-Presidency. Committee members of both parties had telegraphed Truman, insisting that he remain as head of the powerful investigating group. They began to bring real pressure to bear. The Republican members informed Fulton that they would back Truman to the limit on a non-partisan programme if Truman would continue as chairman. They urged him to convince Truman that he should stay on. By arrangement with the Vice-Presidential nominee, Fulton journeyed to Martinsburg, West Virginia, and boarded the train on which Truman was returning to Washington. In the three hours that it took to complete the run to Union Station Fulton presented the arguments in favour of Truman's continuing his Committee chairmanship. But

the Senator would not budge ; instead he convinced Fulton that it was best for Truman to resign.

Later the Committee held an executive session in 'The Doghouse' as they had done so often before. There was loud, even acrimonious discussion. The members kept insisting that Truman should continue as chairman. They assured him they could carry on the Committee's work while he campaigned. If he lost the election he could return as active chairman. If he won, it was then time enough to talk about resigning.

"This Committee has never played politics, but if I remain as chairman and campaign for Vice-President, it will be hauled into politics," Truman said. "It will be attacked, and I will be attacked for remaining as chairman. There is no use arguing. I have submitted my resignation. That's all there is to it." Truman had weathered heavy seas from all sides. The best that the members and Hugh Fulton could do was not enough to make the Missourian alter his decision.

As they say of such men in Missouri, Truman has the faculty of "getting along." This quality will weigh heavily in the future relationships between the Congress and the White House. Controversial matters, including the passage of treaties, economic policies, domestic affairs, and the re-affirmation of the balance of power between the legislative and executive branches will require the proffered hand of co-operation from the President.

Truman has a touch for amicable relations with those of diverse personalities and disputing philosophies. Senator Burton K. Wheeler was bitterly opposed to the New Deal and Truman was for it. They never agreed on foreign policy or the right trend in Democratic politics. Each respected the other and neither allowed the divergence of view to discolour their personal friendship. They simply did not argue the differences. When Truman became President Wheeler was one of the first to telephone and pledge his support.

As a man Harry Truman adds up into an impressive figure.

## *The Nomination*

THE Democratic Party cannot be said to be a cohesive political organization. It is, rather, a coalition of minorities bound together by a general community of self-interest which the late President Roosevelt was always careful to stress and to maintain, and which has served to preserve a semblance of unity in spite of quarrels and sometimes conflicting interests.

In mid-1943 and thereafter the party was disturbed and shaken by subterranean rumblings. Fissures began to open up within the party organization. The Democrats were coming apart at the seams, said political 'wags,' and, indeed, they seemed to be correct.

Southern Democrats, the backbone of the party, were growing increasingly critical of the Roosevelt Administration and its labour policies, which, they felt, established the overriding interests of unions and leftist groups as against the more conservative views of the South. This political restiveness was greatly agitated by the Congress of Industrial Organization's (C.I.O.) bold bid through the Political Action Committee for political power and the defeat of conservative members of the Congress. The tempers of the Southerners rose in indignation.

Negroes—in many industrial cities the balance of power and hitherto solidly for Roosevelt—began to talk openly of returning to the Republican fold, which they had deserted almost *en masse* twelve years before. They complained that



they were being discriminated against in defence industries, by their segregation in army units, and that while the Roosevelt Administration gave lip-service to racial equality it accomplished nothing practical in this respect. The South was also deeply disturbed and agitated by the orders and regulations issued by the Fair Employment Practices Committee set up by executive order.

That much of the political disturbance should centre itself upon and revolve round philosophical, idealistic, and thoroughly honest Henry A. Wallace is one of the vagaries of public life. Wallace was as sincerely desirous of advancing and strengthening the social, industrial, and governmental fabric of America as any conservative; the disagreement was over methods, but it was fundamental.

Wallace's writings and some of his speeches, in which he raised—without specification—the charge of Fascism against business, were calculated to appeal to the more leftist groups for support and enthusiasm. He made many such speeches. He formulated and advanced social and economic programmes which in his opinion were in no sense visionary or experimental, but to the more conservative Democrats were interpreted as downright radical.

As presiding officer of the Senate Wallace in four years had achieved nothing in establishing political friendship and confidence with those conservatives, or even the less advanced liberal Democrats in Congress who are powers in the party machinery of their states. He had hardly a dozen close friends in the Senate, and his appeal was not to those men and interests which had long carried the load for the Democratic Party; it was to the more raw new Democrats who had moved in from labour groups, colleges, universities, and social reform organizations to take over and make over the party.

The depth of this conflict and its nature is best demonstrated by the action of the Congress when Mr Wallace in 1945 was appointed Secretary of Commerce. The Senate would

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not confirm his appointment until Congress had passed and the President had signed legislation stripping Wallace's department of all authority over the forty-billion-dollar Reconstruction Finance Corporation and its many associated lending and spending agencies. It insisted upon this not because it was afraid that Henry Wallace lacked any personal honesty, or that he was insincere in his ambitious programmes for an era of 'the common man.' That was just the trouble—Henry Wallace was sincere, and the social millennium he envisaged, and the methods he advocated for establishing it, made the flesh creep of both the middle-of-the-roaders and the conservatives.

Democrats well remembered that at Chicago in 1940 they had wanted to nominate Paul V. McNutt, of Indiana, Sam Rayburn, of Texas, or any one of several other men for Vice-President, but that President Roosevelt had literally—by telephoned orders to his convention managers—forced Henry Wallace down their throats.

It became apparent in 1943 that if the President should insist upon Wallace's nomination a second time it would split the party so seriously that it could not hope to win. One of the President's secretaries, after a trip through the South and the Middle West, returned to report that the South was ready to revolt if Henry Wallace should stand again. And Wallace, a man of forthright courage and deep convictions, was unwilling to compromise his utterances in deference to this political situation.

He had become a symbol of the division within the party and an agitator of that division. While Wallace was stirring the party turmoil with his pen and voice Harry Truman was playing a straight game of party politics. His War Investigating Committee and its spectacular performance in the national interest had made him, in the eyes of politicians, a truly national figure. Out in Missouri, where he had once been taken by the rural sections as "another Pendergast man" in terms of opprobrium and censure, it was now being

said by farmers and merchants that "Truman is a good man." Truman had kept his investigations scrupulously clean of politics. He had hewn a straight line with his Committee, without thought of political expediency or favouritism.

It was shortly before the National Convention that Truman's good friend Robert Hannegan, the Chairman of the National Democratic Party—a Missourian and political beneficiary of Truman's assistance and support—made a tour round the country. He went back to the White House with one report—it could not again be Henry Wallace. The President received the report with evident disturbance, but he kept his own counsel, even to Hannegan.

Soon thereafter word went along Washington's ever-green political grape-vine that Hannegan was actively promoting Harry Truman for Vice-President. To those who inquired of the Senator he said plainly and bluntly, "If Bob Hannegan is running me for Vice-President he is doing so without my knowledge and without my consent."

At St Joseph, Missouri, months before the convention, Truman introduced Speaker Sam Rayburn, who had gone there to address a Democratic political rally, and said he was backing Rayburn for Vice-President. He repeated the same thing in San Francisco and in half a dozen other places, and he was sincere about it. It was not until shortly before the Democratic convention in July that Truman changed his support.

Rayburn telephoned him from Texas and informed him that the split in the Democratic Party of that state had made it impossible and impractical for him to seek the nomination; the Democrats could not afford to have a Vice-Presidential candidate from a state at war within itself. He told Truman to support some-one else. It was then that Truman enlisted himself in the candidacy of James F. Byrnes, of South Carolina, the 'assistant president' and the man who, as Democratic Whip in the Senate when he first arrived in Washington, had taught Truman many of the finer points of national politics.

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Harry Truman became a 'Byrnes man,' and Byrnes was actively seeking the nomination in the belief that he was acceptable to President Roosevelt.

Just before the convention met in July President Roosevelt issued his famous letter stating that the field was open for the Vice-Presidency, but that if he were a delegate at Chicago he would "vote for Henry Wallace." This letter was undoubtedly calculated to help Wallace's candidacy, and if possible override the opposition which, generated in the South, had spread through the conservative wing of the party in the North.

Harry Truman went out to Independence, Missouri, to visit his mother before going to the convention. There again, only a few days before the convention assembled, he said that he was not a candidate for Vice-President, and that his inclination, if the nomination were tendered to him, would be to decline it. Not only was he not a receptive candidate; he was doing everything possible by his own political manoeuvres and his public pronouncements to discourage the Democrats from nominating him.

What was in his mind? Normally men do not discourage their nomination to the nation's second highest office. Only those who understand the self-effacing humility of Harry Truman, and his depth of feeling for the welfare of his country, can understand his conduct at this time. Harry Truman believed sincerely that the next Vice-President might be called upon to take the Presidency in an hour so awful in its portent and so supercharged with destiny that only a man of supreme qualifications should be named for the second place on the ticket. He felt, honestly, that he would not come up fully to those expectations. Others disagreed with him, but they did not convince him.

Then, again, Truman loved the United States Senate. He believed that there he could perform a real and lasting service. He was acutely aware that Missouri's great senators—William J. Stone, who was chairman of the Foreign Relations

Committee during the first World War, the fiery Jim Reed, and more recently his colleague Bennett Champ Clark—had made their records as opposers to the Administration. Harry Truman wanted to write a chapter of honest service to the Administration in peace and war, and if possible by this means to be recorded in history as a Missouri Senator whose service was not of the opposition but none the less constructive.

He thought there were better men than he for the Vice-Presidency and the Presidency. He was thinking not of his own political ambitions, but of the long days and years ahead, and he was acutely aware that if he became Vice-President, and then President, his life would no longer be his own. Overnight he would be sealed off from his friends. He would become the target of unfriendly elements in the country, the guinea pig of the Press and radio. And his family life would be completely changed. He realized he might be called upon to play a role for which he felt he was not adapted, on a stage that encompassed the entire world.

Harry Truman did not want the nomination. He tried to discourage it and was sincere in his efforts.

It was with these feelings that he telephoned Jimmy Byrnes from Independence just before leaving for the Chicago convention and said, "Jimmy, I'm coming up there to make the speech nominating you for Vice-President."

This was good news to James F. Byrnes, who at that moment thought he could round up sufficient support to ensure his nomination on the second, if not the first, ballot. It was with a high heart and no misgivings that Harry Truman took the train from Independence after talking with 'assistant president' Byrnes. Had he known what was ahead he might have remained at home.

Truman had no sooner alighted from the train at Chicago, to begin his work on the Platform Committee, than he became the centre of rumour and political intrigue. It was a wild, rough time of Democratic hilarity and gossip.

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Sidney Hillman, representing organized labour and the Political Action Committee, moved into Chicago and set up headquarters in the Stevens Hotel, determined to force the nomination of Henry Wallace. Hillman and his followers were equally determined, after sensing the sympathy of the arriving delegates, to prevent the nomination of Byrnes.

It is hard to conceive of a man cast in a more unfortunate role at this convention than Byrnes. He had every vote needed for the nomination save one—President Roosevelt's. He thought he had that, but, as had happened so many times before, President Roosevelt, when Byrnes talked with him, had shown an agreeable friendliness that betokened not at all the acquiescence which seemed so patent. Byrnes had been called from the Supreme Court of the United States by the President he loved and served, to do an extremely difficult job. Part of it, as the original Director of Stabilization, had been to prevent inflation, and that involved holding wages in check. Byrnes had done this with firmness and determination. He clung to the "Little Steel" Formula which put an automatic ceiling to wages, and all the efforts of organized labour to move him away from this policy by one stratagem or another had failed.

Then, also, as a Supreme Court Justice he had written several opinions which, in maritime mutiny cases, were interpreted by organized labour as infringing upon the right to strike.

Organized labour did not like Jimmy Byrnes. The South did.

This was the situation when the 'Resolutions,' or Platform, Committee, began its work, and the quiet man from Missouri did his best to insulate himself from the intrigue which boiled and bubbled up among the delegates. It was an open secret that Hannegan, the National Chairman, was no friend of Wallace; that he believed the ticket could not win with Wallace, and that his best bet was Harry Truman, of Missouri.

Truman was living alone in a suite on the seventeenth

floor of the noisy, over-crowded Stevens Hotel. Therewith began a sequence of events that are worthy of a comic book thriller. The telephone rang sharply. It was Hannegan. He wanted to come over and see Senator Truman right away. The convention was to meet the next day, and Truman, since his arrival on the preceding Friday, had been campaigning for Jimmy Byrnes day and night. He had even brought along his trusted friend of the days of World War I, John Wesley Snyder, a St Louis banker, to pass along the word that Truman did not want the nomination and wouldn't accept it. But, swept along by enthusiasm, and sensing the sentiment of the convention, Snyder reversed his instructions and went hard to work for his old army comrade.

Hannegan, when he arrived at Truman's room, was blunt and direct: "Harry, the President wants you for Vice-President."

Truman turned a shade pale, his mouth opened, and he said, "I told you Bob, I don't believe the President wants me for a running mate. I don't believe it."

"Harry, I can show you," Hannegan replied. He fished in his pocket, pulled out a note and thrust it over to Truman. It was written in pencil, and it said: "Bob, I think Truman is the right man. F.D.R."

Truman's face registered surprise, incredulity, and some consternation. This disclosure jolted him, and despite the authoritative note and the handwriting, which he well recognized, he found it hard to believe. He burst out:

"Bob, I don't want the darned thing."

Then he told Hannegan that he had come to Chicago to nominate Byrnes, and that he was not himself a candidate. That night Harry Truman did not sleep much, and the next day Hannegan telephoned again and asked him to come over to his suite. When Truman arrived there was a group of men, including the Postmaster-General, Frank Walker. Almost on the instant of his arrival the telephone rang. It was the President calling from San Diego, California. He

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wanted to know if Hannegan had "straightened that thing out yet."

"No," said Hannegan, "he won't work with us." And the President with some asperity told Hannegan, "Well, you're a fine National Chairman."

It is doubtful that the Democrats ever had a more unreceptive candidate, or if a politician from Missouri ever had his feet held more consistently to a hotter fire than that endured by Harry Truman. His wife Bess thought he should not take the position; so did Truman. Everybody else thought that he should.

Sidney Hillman, his Political Action Committee battling for Henry Wallace, telephoned Truman and invited him to breakfast. When they sat down to grapefruit, toast, scrambled eggs, and marmalade Truman asked the labour leader:

"Sidney, let me ask you a question. Will you support Jimmy Byrnes for the Vice-Presidency?"

Hillman replied in the negative, saying he was supporting Wallace. A long political discussion followed in which Truman reported that Southerners had threatened to him to "bolt the ticket if Wallace is nominated." It was a nearly impossible situation. Organized labour would seemingly not support Byrnes and the South would not support Wallace.

"If we can't get Wallace," said Hillman, "there is only one other man we would consider supporting."

"Who is that?" Senator Truman asked.

"You, Senator," Hillman said laconically.

Again, as often during the convention, Truman said he was not a candidate and that he was "working for Jimmy Byrnes."

Later in the same day Philip Murray, of the C.I.O., and then A. F. Whitney, President of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, delivered the same report to Harry Truman. His head was beginning to swim, and he was fast becoming a badgered and utterly confused man. Every time he asked for a vote for Byrnes the answer came back, "We're for you."



William Green, the President of the American Federation of Labour, invited him to breakfast, and said that the Federation was supporting him and no one else.

The Missouri delegation met, with Truman presiding as its chairman, and a resolution was introduced indorsing his nomination for Vice-President. Truman ruled it 'out of order.' Sam Wear, the Missouri Democratic Chairman, who was later to be appointed by Truman to succeed District Attorney Milligan at Kansas City, jumped up from his chair and shouted, "There's nobody out of order here but the chairman of this delegation. I demand a vote." The resolution was adopted.

Senators Millard F. Tydings and George L. Radcliffe, of Maryland, ran into Truman in the Stevens Hotel lobby and invited him to address their state delegation. He did so, reiterating that he was not a candidate and that he wanted Byrnes to be nominated. Governor Herbert F. O'Connor, of Maryland, got up, looked straight at Truman, and said, "You're crazy as hell."

Daniel Tobin, president of the Teamsters' Union and a close friend of President Roosevelt's, asked Truman, "What are you going to do?" Truman replied that he was for Byrnes, and that he was set against the idea of nomination for himself.

The nomination was being pushed down Harry Truman's throat just as the Wallace nomination had been forced on the convention in 1940. A delegation of Southern Democrats headed by Senator John H. Bankhead, of Alabama—whose brother, the late Speaker Will Bankhead, had been defeated by Henry Wallace in 1940—called on Truman.

They said simply that if Henry Wallace were nominated the South would 'bolt the ticket,' put up rump Democrats, and split the party into a dozen pieces. If Truman would agree to accept the nomination the South would back him.

"Hell's fire," one Southerner exploded, "the man nominated as Vice-President at this convention may be President

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one day. The South knows that. President Roosevelt may not serve out this term. And we won't have Henry Wallace. It's up to you, Harry—you or nobody. We'll not go along with Henry Wallace on the ticket."

Another said, "You've got to be the Vice-Presidential candidate, Harry. You've got to be."

Harry Truman's mind was in a turmoil. He needed help, and he went to the highest authority.

That night he locked every one out of his room and sat down to think. By this time candidates were blossoming all over the city. Brass bands were 'whooping it up' for one man or another, and the C.I.O. and assorted groups were raising a terrific commotion for Henry Wallace.

Truman tried to think it out, but thinking in such a noisy, crazed atmosphere did not get one far. He asked devoutly the guidance of God to tell him what to do. He knew that Bess Truman would want him to pray, and he himself felt the awful need of help that he could not get anywhere in Chicago—from Hannegan, Mayor Kelly, Senators Tydings or Bankhead, or anywhere else.

It was a wild, confusing atmosphere, and it was one of the most trying hours of Harry Truman's life. He telephoned John Snyder, got him out of bed, and asked what he thought. Snyder said, "Heck, take it, I'm for you." Truman then asked if Snyder would release him from his pledge not to accept the nomination, and Snyder said with great relish that he would be delighted—"Go right ahead, Harry, and take the nomination."

It was nearly midnight when the telephone jangled clamorously, its bell splitting the quiet of the room like a peal of thunder. Harry Truman came back to earth. It was Hannegan, pleading again, and Truman said, "All right, Bob, I'll take it. But I'm going to explain to Jimmy Byrnes first."

He went to Byrnes and told him simply, "Jimmy, they won't be for you." Byrnes replied that he knew it, and he

acquiesced graciously to Truman's nomination. He had been trying to reach the President at San Diego on the telephone. He felt injury and disappointment deeply. At Washington he could see or telephone the President from his 'assistant president's' office in a matter of seconds. Now Roosevelt was inaccessible.

It was arranged—at Truman's request—for his Senate colleague, Bennett Clark, to make the nominating speech. Clark hunted up Truman and said feelingly, "Harry, I'm glad. You've done right. I think your election as Vice-President will make it easier to win the war and fix up the peace."

The rest is political history. The Democratic Party on that nominating night had too many candidates. But almost everyone realized that Harry Truman, the shy, friendly man from Missouri, would, in all probability, be the nominee. Truman sat under the convention platform until almost the end of the session. Then he slipped out to the floor where the Missouri delegation was seated, and was there for an hour before he was discovered—munching a hot dog with a generous smear of mustard. It was the first time since 1912 that the Missouri delegation itself had not fought over which candidate it would support.

There was little doubt on that sultry day in Chicago when the convention met—after an over-night adjournment engineered by Senator Sam Jackson, of Indiana, the permanent chairman, and Hannegan, in order to counteract the power drive of the P.A.C.—that Henry Wallace would lead on the first ballot. There was likewise little doubt that on the second ballot Senator John H. Bankhead, of Alabama, the man with the greyish-white eyebrows of haystack proportions, would switch his state's votes from himself to Truman. That would start the avalanche, as favourite sons scrambled to ride the Truman bandwagon, which had literally run over Harry Truman himself.

That is exactly what did happen. While the second ballot

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was taken Truman munched another hot dog. Bess Truman was disturbed and worried. Mary Margaret, sitting with her mother and father out on the floor, was vivaciously happy. The nomination was a dead certainty ; Truman had something he did not want and something he had sought to obtain first for Sam Rayburn and later, when Rayburn withdrew, for James F. Byrnes.

The cheering delegates crowded on to the platform to shake Truman's hand. Reporters shouted questions, and radio commentators yanked at the cords of their broadcasting equipment to get in closer to the nominee.

Finally a semblance of quiet was restored. Truman blinked as hundreds of flashlight bulbs lighted up his face. Then he looked into the array of microphones and delivered the shortest nomination acceptance speech on record ; just ninety-two words :

You don't know how very much I appreciate the very great honour which has come to the state of Missouri. It is also a great responsibility which I am perfectly willing to assume.

Nine years and five months ago I came to the Senate. I expect to continue the efforts I have made there to help shorten the war and to win the peace under the great leader, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

I don't know what else I can say except that I accept this great honour with all humility.

I thank you.

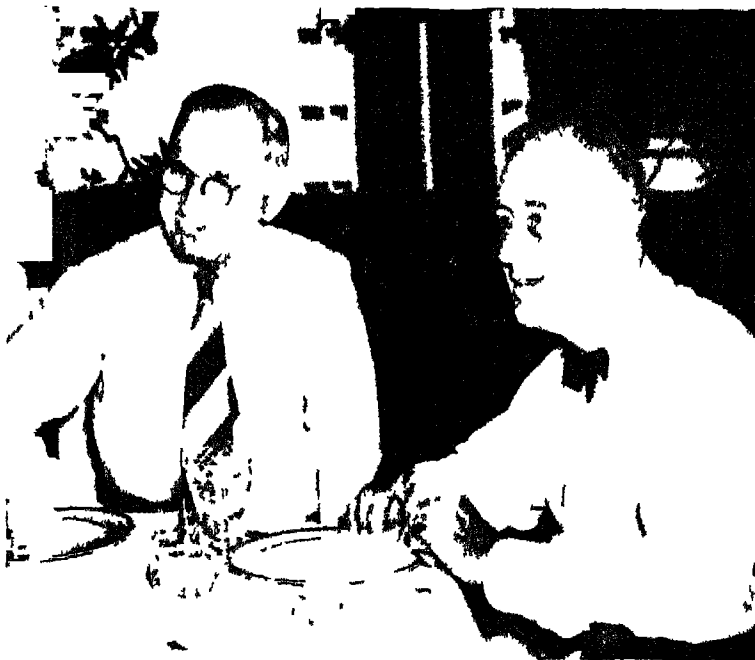
Truman went back to Independence, Missouri, for a rousing rally with the men of old Battery D and a rest. Then he returned to Washington, and on August 18 he called on the President at the White House.

Truman told the President he was never so surprised in his life as when he saw that pencilled note given to Hannegan—"Bob, I think Truman is the right man. F.D.R." The President laughed heartily, and then the two men adjourned to the lawn for an outdoor luncheon. They sat at the southwest corner of the White House, in the shade of the immense magnolia which Andrew Jackson had planted there a hundred

years before in memory of his beloved Rachel. They ate sardines on toast, peas, lettuce and tomato salad, and pickled peaches and drank some coffee. In the words of Harry Truman, President Roosevelt that day was "keen as a briar" and full of zest for the campaign ahead. Roosevelt thought it was "a winning team," which the Democrats, under his instructions, had picked. Originally the two candidates planned few speeches, but before the campaign was over both were stumping strategic areas with the unflagging energy of candidates for sheriff in a doubtful county.

Truman decided that he would accept the nomination in a ceremony at his birthplace, Lamar. It was a bizarre celebration. Newspaper-men by the score poured into the little town, and all South-west Missouri turned out to hear Harry say yes. His speech was undramatic and was not a forensic masterpiece, but its theme was the central thought of so many later speeches—"elect the Democratic ticket and win the war and secure the peace." Merchants who lacked buying sense and advertising skill were over-supplied. Hot-dog stands wound up with a stock they could not sell; barrels of lemonade and bottles of pop were still on the shelves. Lamar had a financial hang-over, but it was a mighty celebration that brought out jalopy, buggy, wagon, and limousine from as far away as the Iowa boundary and south into Arkansas and Kansas. It was estimated that about twelve thousand persons jammed and crowded into the little town. Nine United States Senators were on hand, including Pepper, of Florida, and Guffey, of Pennsylvania, both of whom had vigorously fought Truman's nomination at Chicago. There was no longer much doubt where Lamar, Missouri, could be found.

It, like Harry Truman, had 'arrived.'



In August 1944 Truman as Vice-Presidential nominee and the late Franklin D. Roosevelt mapped out their political strategy at a private luncheon on the White House lawn. Afterwards, Truman remarked that President Roosevelt was "as keen as a blue" and confident of victory in the campaign ahead.

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Five Truman Committee members and counsel meet in 'Harry's Doghouse'. In this small room many of America's most pressing war problems were resolved. *Left to right:* Attorney Hugh Fulton, Senator Tom Connally, Senator Joseph H. Ball, Truman, and Senators Harley Kilgore and Owen Brewster

*Excerpt from Life*

*The Real Candidate*

ONE unspoken thought agitated the Democratic Convention of 1944—the fear that Franklin D. Roosevelt might not live out a fourth term, or even persevere for many more months under the enormous strain and burden of his office.

It was, of course, obvious that only Roosevelt could win the election for the Democratic Party, but thinking Democrats also realized that there was the distinct possibility that in nominating their Vice-Presidential candidate they were, in fact, naming the real candidate for President.

Stories and rumours were circulating that Roosevelt was in extremely ill health. And when the President went through Chicago en route to San Diego without stopping to liven the convention show, it was widely commented on and added to the apprehension that lurked beneath the surface of the carnival atmosphere. No man before had ever served three terms, much less undertaken to carry on for sixteen years.

Openly every one spoke hearteningly of the President's amazing vigour and vitality, his ability to rest at Hyde Park for a week-end and 'stage a come-back,' but again underneath this tone of optimism there was that same wistful note and mood of anxiety.

Keeping in mind the question of Roosevelt's health, the delegates proceeded with their noisy, unmannered deliberations, struggling not so much to agree on a help-mate for the President, but to choose a man who would be able to



keep the party strong and united and who could, if called upon, step into the White House, carry on the policies of Roosevelt, and lead the nation forward until the next election.

Viscount Bryce, at one time a member of the Parliament of Great Britain and a noted student of American government, viewed with considerable amazement the phenomenon of party conventions in the United States. But he decided that the system, for all its faults and frenzied manipulations, was the result of a growth towards mature democracy and was also thoroughly representative of the people. Bryce remarked that the system was more productive of nominees who were 'safe' rather than brilliant. "For party feeling," he wrote, "strong enough to carry in on its back a man without conspicuous positive merits, is not always strong enough to procure forgiveness for a man with positive faults."

The truth of these assertions was borne out as the convention proceeded to look over the field of Vice-Presidential possibilities. The delegates were determined to allow only the right man for their purposes to strain through the sieve of their peculiar selective process. Here was raucous, uninhibited Government operating in an open arena of horse-play, bedlam, and bombastic speeches with organ music and toy horns sounding the musical accompaniment. But when the smoke from millions of cigarettes had lifted and charwomen had swept away the last remnants of broken pop-bottles, peanut-shells, and ice-cream wrappers a choice had been made, based on sound judgment and shrewd political instinct.

Delegates from forty-eight states and the territorial possessions, representing all the varied and often irreconcilable interests of a large industrial and agricultural nation, had assembled. A great influential free Press, lined up for and against the various candidates and the multitude of factions and interests it spoke for, added its own vociferous opinions.

A strong bloc had tried to squeeze through Henry Wallace,

but he got caught in the fine mesh of the screening. Four years before he had been designated. But the President's physical condition had been excellent then. Since that time a world war had been raging for more than three years ; and also certain new liberal elements in the party were now getting out of hand. This was 1944, and Henry Wallace was not acceptable.

In the cases of the other possible candidates there were different reasons. But it amounted to the same thing—they could not be sifted down fine enough. It is at once a source of astonishment and reassurance that the final choice of Harry Truman conformed so nearly to the particular standards of the Democratic Party and so closely approximated the needs of that party and the country when it was later to lose its leader.

In his analysis of the necessary qualifications of an American President Viscount Bryce stated :

. . . A President need not be a man of brilliant intellectual gifts. . . . His main duties are to be prompt and firm in securing the due execution of the laws, and maintaining the public peace, careful and upright in the choice of the executive officials of the country. Eloquence, whose value is apt to be overrated in all free countries, imagination, profundity of thought or extent of knowledge, are all in so far a gain to him that they make him a ' bigger man ' and help him to gain a greater influence over the nation, an influence which, if he be a true patriot, he may use for its good. But they are not necessary for the due discharge in ordinary times of the duties of his post. A man may lack them and yet make an excellent President. Four-fifths of his work is the same in kind as that which devolves on the chairman of a commercial company or the manager of a railway, the work of choosing good subordinates, seeing that they attend to their business, and taking a sound, practical view of such administrative questions as require his decision. Firmness, common sense, and, most of all, honesty—an honesty above all suspicion of personal interest—are the qualities which the country chiefly needs in its Chief Magistrate.

It is apparent that Bryce had just such a man as Harry

Truman in mind when he wrote these words. He conformed to the pattern even though these were not "ordinary times" as Bryce had stipulated. However, Washington newspapermen, in a special opinion poll early in 1944, had voted Truman as the civilian next to Roosevelt "who knew most about the war." This judgment was based on their observations of his behaviour over a period of more than three years as chairman of the War Investigating Committee of the Senate. This, with millions of American troops fighting in France, Italy, and the Pacific, with the war by no means resolved, was another vitally important fact to be added to the already thick dossier that the delegates had compiled and carefully indexed on Harry Truman. Only a man who knew intimately how the war was being conducted could qualify as a runner-up for the Commander-in-Chief.

The nation at large was generally unmindful of Truman's philosophy on major problems. They knew about the work of the Truman Committee and had read about Truman's Pendergast connexions. That was about all. Politicians, on the other hand, were better informed. They knew the kind of man he was and what he stood for.

The delegates realized that if Truman should become the Chief Executive he would have access to information formerly denied him. As President he would also be subject to intense pressure and exposed to the most powerful special interest groups and persuasive blocs of opinion. These influences might serve to modify, strengthen, or soften the views he once held. Nevertheless, the general pattern of his thinking was set—he was an advocate of liberalism without excessive or violent political theories. He believed in party loyalty and discipline. He was warm and friendly and, above all, had an honest, practical point of view.

Racial relations, for example, was a serious issue facing the Government. It was becoming most alarming, and threatened to be a source of real trouble after the war ended. On this question Harry Truman's public record was clear.

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He had never made an attack on any race, nor upon any individual because of his racial extraction. He had supported anti-lynching and anti-poll tax measures and had voted to invoke Senatorial *clôture* and stop obstructionists whenever strong efforts were made to force such bills through the Congress. He had offered no evidence of other than enlightened regard for the problems of the Negro. Moreover, Truman recognized, as Roosevelt did, that the South was one of the country's greatest problems. If he were to become President he would be in the strongest possible position to effect a solution. His roots grew deep into the soil of Missouri.

His family sympathies had been with the Southern side during the Civil War, and he knew intimately the miseries and hurts inflicted upon a state divided in its loyalties. History had taught him that after the Civil War the wealth of the West had been largely carried back to the industrial East, with the South not sharing in the national development and never wholly recovering from the chaos of that war. Coming from the geographical centre of America, he might be able to restore the balance and effect economic readjustments promising untold benefits to the nation. Truman would believe in doing this by improving farms and schools, by raising wages, adjusting goods rates, and conserving natural resources. The Negro would be given those rights guaranteed him by the Constitution. In June 1940 Truman said at Sedalia, Missouri :

I believe in the brotherhood of man ; not merely the brotherhood of white men, but the brotherhood of all men before law. I believe in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. In giving to the Negroes the rights that are theirs we are only acting in accord with our ideals of a true democracy. If any class or race can be permanently set apart from, or pushed down below, the rest in political and civil rights, so may any other class or race when it shall incur the displeasure of its more powerful associates, and we may say farewell to the principles on which we count our safety.

Further proof of Truman's regard for the rights of each citizen was offered throughout the years he had led the Truman Committee in its many investigations. All witnesses were judicially protected and given a full and fair opportunity to be heard. He had opposed national service legislation because it would have authorized the drafting of men for civilian jobs and permitting government bureaux to tell a man where and when he could work and in what capacity. In the same way he was strongly opposed to military encroachments upon the direction and management of civilian war production.

I personally am a firm believer in individual incentive, he said in September 1942, and I believe that this country reached its present development as soon as it did largely because there was free play for individual initiative. I don't want government officials, whether selected from the ranks of business or not, determining who will produce and how much will be produced. . . . The profit motive of our economic system, I think, is superior to any other system the world has known. . . .

Two years later he reiterated this opinion.

There must be, he said, and is, ample room in this country for free enterprise, room for every citizen to have the right to achieve and progress according to his capabilities and his industry and integrity.

Truman's willingness to permit free rein to private enterprise was tempered by his realization that resourcefulness and initiative are encouraged only by application of practical measures :

I am one of those who believe that man's progress towards a higher level of civilization depends upon man's ability to learn and utilize the laws of nature. I have little patience with those who concoct fancy and plausible schemes out of thin air, ignoring the lessons and experiences of the past, and who, because they are convinced that existing methods and systems are imperfect, conclude that any change, no matter how ill-conceived or ill-founded, would be an improvement.

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In addition Truman had often demonstrated his belief that free enterprise and the profit motive did not give licence to monopolies or big business. He had shown his inherent suspicion of both, since he regarded the small business-man as the backbone of the country. In addressing the Missouri Legislature in 1939 Truman said :

If you will read history you will find that concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few was the fundamental cause of the downfall of the greatest nations of the past. We are trying to profit by those examples. Monopoly cannot exist in a republic, and a republic cannot exist when its resources are in the hands of a few. I am not an admirer of bigness. I have said on the floor of the Senate that a thousand insurance companies, with four million dollars each in assets, are better for the country than one company with four billions. I think that is true of steel factories, packing plants, and grocery stores. I want to do whatever I can to help the small business-man—the big one will take care of himself.

In 1943 Truman had spoken out in the Senate on an issue that is of prime interest to most taxpayers—the spending of public funds :

It seems that when public funds are to be expended no one has any interest in what happens to them, no matter what his responsibilities may be under his oath of office. I dislike to make such a statement, but unless this body and the house of Representatives exercise their prerogatives in connexion with the purse strings of the Government, much of the money appropriated will be thrown away for no good purpose whatever.

Six months later he was again complaining, "Whether it be by legislative or the executive branch, we need more effective management to accomplish economies in Government."

At the same time that Truman was preaching thrift he had consistently upheld military requests for money and authority for national defence. In 1938 he said :

I believe in an adequate national defence programme. I think that the old Puritan who prayed regularly for protection against

the Indians was much safer when, at the same time, he prudently kept his powder dry.

To defray the cost of such vast expenditures Truman had advocated in 1939 a sound tax system, with the burden so distributed that the smaller man can continue to operate his own private business concern and so help by taking up the slack in employment :

If we could get an equitable, honest system whereby the people who benefit most from government could be made to pay for it, and have our dual state and federal system of government so arranged that there would be no duplication of methods of raising revenue, the tax millennium would be here. Since that seems to be an ideal condition it may never come. We have to do the best we can under conditions as we find them. . . . I am hoping that an honest effort will be made in Washington to ease and simplify the tax system.

Yet although Truman wanted to see business benefited by tax readjustments, and by protecting and encouraging small business, he had also seen the urgent need for international economic exchange.

The United States cannot, nor does it wish to, shirk leadership in post-war economic collaboration. Our own industrial accomplishments have nominated us as the nation that must assume a position to guide others in the pathway of peaceful production. And our own national needs and economic welfare dictate that we apply ourselves to this work at once. . . . The future peace depends on an economically healthy United States, and we cannot have economic health without a volume of foreign trade above and beyond anything we have ever had before. . . .

Truman backed up these views by consistently supporting the Reciprocal Trade Programme of Cordell Hull. He discounted the theory that economic health could be established behind a high tariff wall.

Coupled with these opinions on international economic relations he had vigorous and forthright views on international security. He visualized co-operation for mutual

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advantage as a two-way street with all parties showing deference for the opinions and special problems of the others. Unilateral action, he believed, could only serve to smash any peace machinery that was created. On many occasions Truman had said :

I am just as sure as I can be that this World War is the result of the 1919-1920 isolationist attitude, and I am equally sure that another and a worse war will follow this one unless the United Nations and their allies, and all the other sovereign nations, decide to work together for peace. . . .

For the difficult post-war period he had formulated a detailed and farsighted programme. "If this country can utilize all its manpower to make engines of destruction . . . surely we can use that same manpower to provide every working man with more of the good things of life." War-time restrictions—the wage, labour, materials, and other controls administered by Government during the war—Truman had strongly insisted should be relaxed as soon as possible :

These restrictions must be maintained as long as they are required to assure victory—just that long and no longer. Personal and business liberties, and freedom from regimentation are not wholly abstract ideals. They are concrete realities which enter daily in our lives. They seriously affect our happiness and prosperity. Anyone whose duties relate to the war must keep this in mind. . . .

We are determined that we will not go back to the situation that existed in 1939, when we had nine million unemployed and five million not listed as seeking employment but who have subsequently been employed in war work. This means that we must be resolved to utilize the new productive capacity of the splendid plants built during the war. We must use them to provide jobs for the men in the armed services and for the war workers. We need and want their products.

Business will have to avoid cartels and combinations and concentrate on producing more and better goods. It must learn to earn its income by working with small margins of profit on a vastly increased amount of business.

Labour will have to concentrate its efforts on its legitimate



desires for high wages and good working conditions. It will have to avoid stoppages, make-work practices, and resistance to the development and installation of new and better production techniques designed to lower cost.

With his long experience in the field of transportation, Truman had also demonstrated his understanding and vision. He had advocated a national transportation policy, integrating the use of railways, highways, waterways, interstate goods lines and air communications. He had opposed Government ownership and favoured open, competitive, private financing of transportation, with the Government standing by as referee. For years Truman had argued for a national air policy and fully understood the almost inconceivable projection of air commerce in the years ahead. He had said: "It is clear that this kind of transport will lace together the great cities of the world in a new pattern when peace comes."

On housing Truman declared :

The housing field should provide a whole new industry for this country, greater in size and importance than the automobile industry ever was. . . . The tenements should be torn down and replaced with new wide and handsome boulevards lined with five- and six-storey apartment structures of the most modern type. Such structures should have playgrounds on the roofs where children can safely play and get the light and air they need. . . .

These were the more important opinions and views expressed by Truman of Missouri. Party leaders and influential political leaders, including President Roosevelt, were well aware of this record; far more so than the country, and they knew its invulnerability to attack from the opposition.

Furthermore, they realized that Truman had expressed his beliefs from conviction and not, as some others were prone to do, for purposes of self-advertisement. All his ideas were not his own, nor had he necessarily written them down himself. That was unimportant. If he had taken

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advice it was good advice and he had not hesitated to follow it.

Truman's record was one of honesty, progressive advancement, constructive investigation, sound legislation, and enlightened voting. This, then, was the kind of thinking of the man who was to become the real Presidential candidate of the Democratic Party.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### *Campaigner*

NEWSPAPER reporters who were assigned to cover the campaign of Harry Truman as Vice-Presidential candidate accepted the task eagerly but with some misgivings. He was not a colourful man, nor a brilliant performer, and such drama as would be found, it was obvious, would have to be wrung from an unwilling typewriter with a weary hand. All the signs pointed to a commonplace toiling job without any particular pleasantry or inspiration and not very much excitement.

The campaign opened unofficially in New Orleans on October 12, 1944, less than a month before the election, in what was billed as a "non-political" speech. It turned out to be exactly that, and the Press thought it was a slow beginning. But it was characteristic of Harry Truman. For many years he held membership in the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association and had long been an exponent of flood control measures—a consideration of great import to the territory of the Mississippi and Missouri Valleys. Despite its being an election year with an opportunity for making a vote-getting speech, Truman determined to discuss again this vital subject. So he talked about flood control and the necessity for soil conservation, and restated the important, though what sounded like threadbare, themes which had long been identified with the Roosevelt Administration—preserve the soil, stop the floods, conserve resources, and thereby enrich the people and save their substance.

Truman had no campaign train in the traditional manner.

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Wealthy business-men had indicated a willingness to defray the cost of an elaborate and expensive effort to advertise and broadcast Truman's cause, and it is safe to say that he could have cast his campaign in any proportions he chose. He decided to do it Harry Truman's way.

He would have none of fancy trappings and lavish appurtenances. Instead he travelled in a combination club and sleeping-car named Henry Stanley. The reporters had their sleeping and living accommodations in a car ahead, and the two hooked on to any handy train for overnight and day-time runs. There were three typewriters in Truman's car, a supply of paper, a loud-speaker system for the candidate, and a recording apparatus. Truman would not even approve of a secretarial staff to do the typing and mimeographing of speeches.

Hugh Fulton, who had resigned from the Senate War Investigating Committee to help in Truman's campaign, was the chief adviser. He wrote the rough drafts of the campaign speeches, helped to polish them, and advised on general policy. The other assistants were black-haired Matthew J. Connelly, who early demonstrated an acute attunement to political nuances and public reaction, and Edward McKim, from Omaha, a Great War friend of Truman's who watched over the candidate with the wariness of a zealot, and sometimes advised on policy.

Everywhere along the route prominent local citizens boarded the train and rode on to the next stop, talking things over in friendly fashion and informing the candidate on their 'domestic issues.' Truman would listen carefully, ask questions, and store away in his head all the miscellaneous information and various points of view on local and national problems. He renewed his old acquaintances and made many new ones.

In his speeches Truman did not attempt to raise political fits of emotion. He delivered straight, matter-of-fact arguments for the retention of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the

White House—not for the election of Harry Truman to the Vice-Presidency. He urged the voters to let Roosevelt finish the job of winning the war and building the structure of a society for peace, armed with authority to prevent aggression—one that would embrace within its lofty idealism the great and small nations of the world. These were Truman's political chords. But on the specific issues involved he struck with the blows of a whip. From the very start he took firm and positive stands.

On America's Labour Day, 1944, a month before he opened his campaign, he gave a preview of what his strategy would be. In the industrial heart of America, Detroit, he told the working-man in plain language :

We of the Democratic Party are not resigned to the prospect of huge unemployment after the war. . . . We have built the plants and facilities with which all of this can be accomplished. Now let us see to it that they are operated. . . .

When monopoly demanded the privilege of junking those plants of World War I—and let me assure you that for monopolistic purposes this was a very special privilege—a Republican Administration knuckled under. It granted monopoly that privilege and many potential post-war industries that could have contributed much to the last generation died a-borning. . . .

. . . The same old group is putting on the same pressure to protect their vested interests. And the party that has always knuckled under to monopoly, the Republican Party, is asking America for a chance to control our affairs. . . .

To-day American labour wants a Government that can do something. If need be a Government that will do much. . . .

But now a word of warning from a friend. Labour has duties as well as rights. . . . Like Cæsar's wife, labour must be above suspicion. You must elect and follow wise leaders of proved integrity. Your contracts must be sacred. Above all else you must turn in an honest day's work every day you are on the job. . . . You do your job, and the Democratic Administration under Franklin D. Roosevelt will do its job. Your job is to produce; Government's job is to see to it that you get a fair, square deal and the right to enjoy the product of your toil.

At Seattle, Washington, on October 19, at the height of

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the campaign, Truman was still talking bluntly, this time on the importance of international collaboration for maintenance of the peace.

Let's have an end to shilly-shallying. Does the Republican candidate still have one foreign policy for Wisconsin and another one for New York? . . .

Can you afford to take a chance on a fence-straddler with a record on foreign affairs like that of the Republican candidate, when your future and that of your children is at stake? . . .

With the experienced leadership which produced the miracle of war production we are winning the war. With that same experienced leadership we shall win the peace, convert our industry successfully to peacetime production, and march on to a new and better life. . . .

Also while in the Far West he hit even harder at the Republican Party by stressing the split over the late Wendell Willkie :

It is under the domination of reactionaries. With the single exception of Wendell Willkie, they have always succeeded in obtaining a candidate conservative enough to suit them. They like their present candidate, and with his help they prevented Wendell Willkie from even being a delegate to their convention.

Of Dewey Truman said openly, "Such a man should not become President of the United States."

In Illinois he discussed big business :

The Republican Party frankly favoured big business, . . . but even the business-men found that the Republican prosperity was phoney. Wall Street speculators were getting rich because the Republican Party let them flood the country with worthless securities.

And in the end even the Wall Street speculators lost. A lot of them jumped out of twenty-storey buildings in the middle of the Hoover prosperity, and we Democrats gaoled a lot more of them for fraud. The Democratic Administration passed security legislation that will prevent that kind of fraud from ever happening again. But the damage had been done. . . .

In the same speech he also addressed the farmers :

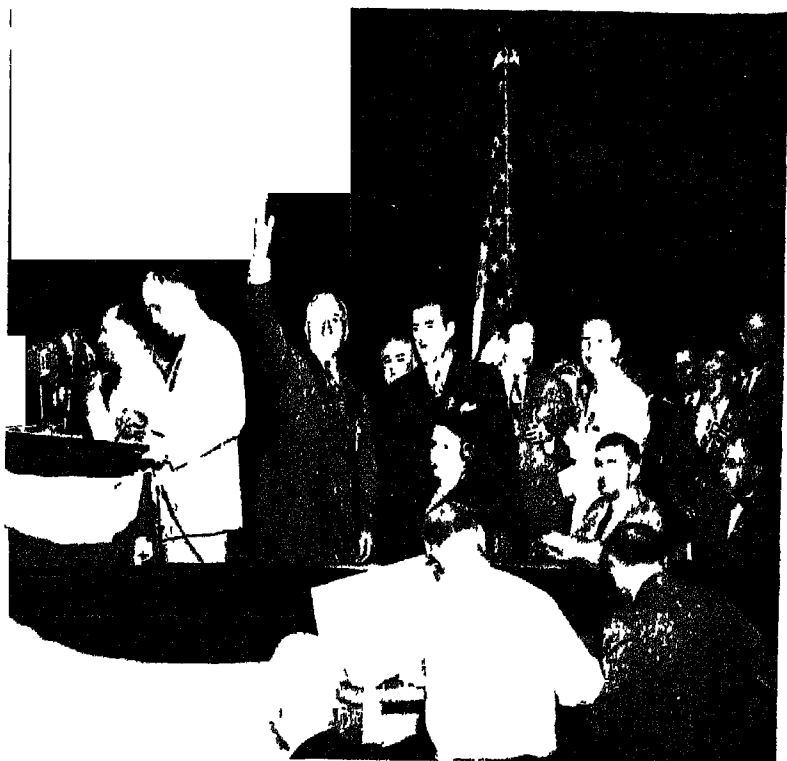
I say to you that the welfare of the farmer and the working-man go hand in hand. . . . The Democratic Administration will continue to work to improve the living standards of both. . . .

Every American deserves a fair break, and he will get it under the Democratic Administration. . . . How their [the Republicans] tune has changed since the Republican convention of 1944! You may remember when one of the key speakers of that convention solemnly pronounced that under the Democratic Administration the farmer works all day and keeps books all night. He did not choose to remind the American farmer that under the administration of Hoover a farmer worked all day, worked all night, and had no books to keep. . . .

The Government under the three Republican administrations was too busy helping big business to spare any time for the farmers. . . . We Democrats will not say it is un-American to help the farmer and the working-man in hard times. . . .

Truman kept throwing these body blows at the Republicans, and forced them into advanced positions they did not want to take, but Truman always seemed to be getting there first, and that meant votes. By the end of the campaign he had travelled through Texas, New Mexico, on up to San Francisco; then to Seattle, back to Minneapolis, and Illinois; east to Boston, New York, and down to Washington and West Virginia; then finally to Pittsburgh and St Louis. All along the route he kept demanding that the Republicans come out into the open.

Opponents of Roosevelt sensed, as had the delegates at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, that Truman might well be the real candidate for the Presidency. In any event, for twelve years they had tried in vain to beat Roosevelt by personal attack. Now, they reasoned, they could defeat Roosevelt and Truman by concentrating on Roosevelt's runner-up. Anti-administration orators and newspapers turned loose a furious attack on Truman's record as a Jackson County judge, as a Pendergast politician, as a Senator, and charged him with being a former member of the Ku Klux Klan. They conveniently ignored the record of the Truman



Senator Truman waves to the Chicago convention crowd in July 1944, after being named on the second ballot as President Roosevelt's runner-up. Robert Hannegan, the National Democrat Chairman, stands at his left.

*Photo Press Association, Inc.*





On April 12, 1945, at 7 9 P M, Harry S Truman was sworn in at the White House as President of the United States

*Left to right* Frances Perkins (Secretary of Labour), Henry Stinson (Secretary of War), Henry A Wallace (Secretary of Commerce), J A Kiug (the Chief of the War Production Board), James Forrestal (Secretary of the Navy), Claude Wickard (Secretary of Agriculture), unidentified, Francis Biddle (Attorney-General), Mr Truman, Edward R Stettinius, junior (Secretary of State), Mrs Truman, Harold L Ickes (Secretary of Interior), Harlan F Stone (the Chief Justice), Sam Rayburn (Speaker of the House of Representatives), Fred M Vinson (War Mobilizer), and Joseph Martin, Robert Ramspeck, and John McCormack. Congressmen

*Photo Press Association Inc*

Committee and Truman's long service as a forthright public official. By these devious tactics they conceived of holding Truman up to public scorn and ridicule, of making him nervous and plaguing him into mistakes that would mean defeat for the Roosevelt-Truman ticket. They succeeded in presenting a grossly distorted picture. But no greater political miscalculation was ever made. The noise of the backfire sounded across the nation on election night.

First of all Truman was a seasoned campaigner, who thoroughly understood politics of the vicious variety. Second, he was equipped with a record that was practically invulnerable. His views were settled and constructive. Third, he had incurred few personal or political enmities during his career.

Between major stops Truman was on the running-board at every halt of the train. No matter how few had gathered on the station platform, he would make an appearance. The newspaper-men soon discovered that in Truman they had an adept, wary campaigner. It did not take them long to sense that Truman was making votes—not great blocs of votes, perhaps, but he was gathering up friends all along the route, friends who would go out and spread the gospel that Harry Truman was a 'regular fellow' who knew what he was talking about.

His platform speeches were confident, sure of success in the election, rich in their praise of President Roosevelt, and devoid of attacks upon or mention of Dewey, the Republican Presidential candidate. Truman holds a sound political philosophy that much can be gained by refusing to mention the opposing candidate. It makes more friends, avoids personal attacks, and concentrates public attention away from the opposition. Except when debating major issues, why advertise Dewey by mentioning him? In these little five-minute platform speeches Truman was warm, friendly, and chatty, almost one of the folks standing on the platform. He leaned over and shook hands all round until the train

began to move away. 'Then he would stand and wave a friendly Missouri departure.

Truman was up early every morning, before 7 A.M., to read the morning papers picked up on the overnight journey, and to breakfast over his campaign problems. Later he would have a glass of milk and a sandwich while he went over the texts of speeches with Fulton. Two days out, the newspaper-men were sold on the candidate, if somewhat irritated by Fulton's independence and disregard of their split-second schedules for wiring in copy. Fulton's interest was in Truman's speeches; the newsmen's instructions were to make deadlines and file speeches two days ahead of delivery. Since there were often as many as nine speeches in one day, Truman's small staff could not always get them out on time. Truman was genuinely frank and candid with the reporters. And when they had difficulties they did not carry them to others of the *entourage*. They went straight to the candidate, and he did his best to arrange his schedules to suit their convenience.

In the evenings, when the long business of the day was done at ten o'clock, Harry Truman would repair to his room, pull on a pair of cool broadcloth pyjamas, don some kid slippers, and then settle down in his old flower-figured silk dressing-robe.

He might read the newspapers or pore over a speech. Or, frequently he would send up to the reporters' car and inquire, "How about it, boys? Let's have a little ten-cent ante!" Then, back in the campaign car, the reporters gathered round a table, Truman would pile out of his dressing robe, the cards would be dealt, and the game would run for an hour or two. In these sessions Harry Truman was at his best. His running fire of poker table conversation was convivial and unvarnished. He talked politics, he discussed government, and told stories and sought the advice of the reporters. He literally took them into his confidence, and said afterwards that many a suggestion made round the poker table cropped up later in his speeches

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with real returns to himself and his cause. He asked the correspondents to criticize his speaking, and they did so without hesitation. They told him his delivery was halting and somewhat stodgy, that he did best when he was talking extemporaneously to crowds on the train steps. Thereafter there was less of strained effort and more of ease in Truman's speeches ; less of the laboured preparation and more of the impromptu delivery.

Truman frequently left his prepared texts to speak his conviction of God's will that America should play a great role in future international affairs, and on such occasions, his voice was deeply sincere :

I believe—I repeat, I believe honestly—that Almighty God intends now that we shall assume the leadership which He intended us to assume in 1920, and which we refused. And I believe that if we do that our problems will almost solve themselves.

This thought ran like a refrain through many of Truman's speeches—it was discussed and re-emphasized at the poker table.

The idea of passing through Texas without seeing his old friend and political professor John Nance Garner, at Uvalde, was unthinkable to Harry Truman. He wired Garner that he would be through to Uvalde at a certain hour, and would be glad to see him at the train. It was late afternoon, and the bright sunshine slanted down through the dusty haze over the countryside when the train pulled into Uvalde. It had hardly come to a stop when Truman hopped briskly off the steps and strode rapidly to a big white-haired, white-eyebrowed old man.

The former Vice-President Garner was wearing tattered brown khaki working-trousers, a brown working-shirt, and a battered white hat, and in his teeth he clenched a frayed, outrageous Mexican ' cheroot,' according to Garner " one of the best cigars in the world." His fingers were dyed deep with the stain of nutshells, for he was busy with his hickory

harvest, and the palms and backs of his hands were roughened and chapped. He was the man who through two Roosevelt terms had been Vice-President of the United States. Now he was back at home, harvesting and digging in the soil after 'the Chief' had dropped him for Henry Wallace in 1940. He was a crusty, salty character, lusty with life and loaded with labours. Here was the man who had occupied the second highest post in the nation, and here was the candidate who aspired to it—intimate friends who had sometimes lifted a toast in Garner's office in far-away Washington during better, more halcyon days for both.

"Hiya, Harry!" the old man shouted. "How in the world are you, bless your old soul?" He threw his arms round Truman and then held the candidate at arm's length, looking him over closely. Then, in a shout, "I never felt better in my life, myself! I wish we had time to 'strike a blow for liberty!'"

"We have got time, Jack," said Truman. "You come right here in my car. We'll have one together."

"All right," shouted Garner, "we'll 'strike a blow for liberty!' They won't pull out with me on the train and take me along, will they?"

The glasses were filled by the sixty-eight-year-old coloured porter Lawrence D. Ervin, of New York, a campaign veteran who years before had attended the old Texan. He swelled with pride when Garner boomed, "Hello, there, boy! You coming along all right?"

"This is fine," the old man in khaki trousers bellowed. "Put a little branch water in there, son. Harry, I never felt better in my life. I'm going to live to be ninety-three. I work from seven o'clock in the morning to seven at night. And I've got enough fluid and food at my house to last me the rest of my life! This is good!"

The time came for the train to pull away. They had not discussed politics at all. 'Cactus' Jack Garner, who would only have made such a trip on so short a visit for a few men,

hopped off the train. Ervin, at Truman's instructions, jumped off too, with a box of twenty-five-cent cigars, stuck them under the old man's arm, and grabbed the carriage-door handle as the train chugged away. 'Cactus' Jack stayed on the dusty station platform and waved. Truman stood and waved too, until the old man's figure was a tiny, blurred image in the distance.

There was little excitement during the campaign tour. Harry Truman, the likeable, sincere candidate, was out making votes largely by pounding away at the major issues. It was not a colourful campaign—far from it. But there were pleasant experiences in poker games, stories, straight-from-the-shoulder, honest chats, and in the farmer-neighbourliness that early convinced the sceptical and agnostic reporters of the genuineness of the man whose campaign they covered.

Up in Massachusetts, at a Press conference, Truman demonstrated his forthrightness and disregard for consequences where he thought he was right. Some one asked him again about isolationism, and then the name of sedate David Ignatius Walsh, Senator and former Governor, and an isolationist before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour, was brought into the conversation. Truman could have avoided this question by stating that Walsh was not running for office that year and therefore Walsh's views were not pertinent to the campaign. Instead, Truman, though he had carefully considered the consequences, remarked bluntly that Walsh still had two years to serve in the Senate, and there was hope for his reformation. This enraged the elderly Senator, it aroused the Catholics, of whom Walsh was one, and it jolted Walsh's personal following. The schism was so deep and critical, and so supercharged with possibilities of losing Massachusetts, that President Roosevelt later invited Walsh to his own campaign train and, in effect, apologized in order to heal the breach that Truman's remarks about Walsh's isolationism had created.

Harry Truman's unfortunate statement had for forty-eight hours caused extreme embarrassment within the Democratic Party. Truman had not evaded questions, he had not trimmed sails, and he had spoken with no regard for political expediency. Harry Truman had told the truth as he saw it, and sometimes politicians are not supposed to do that.

Throughout the campaign Truman resolutely refused to discuss President Roosevelt's health or countenance for a moment the suggestion that he might himself become President. He raised a wall of silence against this possibility which had been uppermost in the minds of many delegates and most political leaders at Chicago when they had nominated Truman in July. So far as the Vice-Presidential candidate was concerned, the President was in good health. God willing he would serve out his term, and that was that.

He was equally firm on another point. When, shortly after his nomination, newspapers inquired into a fact long-known to most Capitol reporters—that Truman's wife Bess was in his employ as a secretary at 4500 dollars per year—Truman frankly admitted it. It was the truth, as public Senate financial statements would readily show.

"Certainly my wife works for me," Truman said. "And she earns every cent I pay her. She helps me with my personal mail, helps me with my speeches, and with my committee work. I don't know where I could get a more efficient or willing worker."

The charge, from which opponents expected to make political capital, fell absurdly flat after this frank acknowledgment. The truth was that Bess Truman agreed to help her husband and accept a salary, performing at the same time the duties of a housewife, when the strain of war-time income taxes, plus the expenses of living in Washington and educating Mary Margaret, became a worrying financial burden. She worked late hours going over letters, official documents, committee proceedings, and arranging appointments.

Truman put an end to this annoying intrusion into his

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personal affairs by the simple expedient of ready admission and honest explanation.

There was another aggravation, however, that had to be endured. That was the insistence of local bands at almost every campaigning place on playing the *Missouri* waltz. Truman likes the piece, but he had to stand at attention constantly as it was rendered at cross-roads and watering-places. When the campaign had ended the notes of "way down in Missouri" were still clanging in his ears.

The campaign plans, followed through, called for a joint appearance of Harry S. Truman and Henry A. Wallace at Madison Square Garden in New York two nights before the election. Wallace was the man Roosevelt had rejected in deference to political necessities. He was the dreamer, the idealist, the darling of organized labour and the P.A.C. Truman was the practical, down-to-earth man that Roosevelt had chosen in Wallace's stead. The speech for the New York political rally was rewritten several times. The National Committee submitted drafts which were lavish in their praise of the then discarded Vice-President. But Truman made a straightforward reference praising Henry A. Wallace as one of the most constructive Secretaries of Agriculture the country had ever had.

There was no commitment of loyalty or debt to the newly formed liberal groups which at Chicago had supported Wallace so vociferously, and which had sponsored the New York rally. He simply reiterated his own brand of liberalism and made no direct or indirect appeal to any particular group. Actually, in Madison Square Garden, Truman seized the chance of hitting Dewey in his home state. He went into the question of the military conduct of the war :

Of course, the Republicans say that the war is being won by our generals and admirals and not by the President. Actually it is being won by the hard work and courage of our fighting men on every battlefield and every sea. But our fighting men are being directed by generals and admirals selected by the



President, and their plans are being co-ordinated by him. . . . Mr Dewey has paid the President a very high compliment by telling the American people that, if elected, he would continue the chiefs of staff selected by the President. That action recognizes the superb job done by the President to date.

But we can not trust Mr Dewey to keep hands off, for only a short time after he announced his intention to continue the chiefs of staff Mr Dewey, without consulting them and without knowing their plans—or the problems they faced—publicly stated that the supreme command in the Pacific should be given to a particular general [MacArthur]. Maybe that was only campaign oratory to curry the votes of the General's friends, but it was alarming evidence of a willingness to make reckless and uninformed decisions with respect to the conduct of the most terrible war in history. . . .

And Truman spoke again about isolation :

Step by step Mr Dewey has been forced to abandon the isolationist sentiments he expressed in 1940 and to agree with most of the policies determined by the President. Aside from the fact that it is better to follow the leader who had the courage and vision to blaze the trail, we must remember that Mr Dewey had to be bludgeoned into giving lip-service to the President's programme, because he knew that the people demanded it. . . . We need a President who speaks from conviction and not from expediency.

After final speeches in West Virginia, Pittsburgh, and St Louis to strengthen local support, Truman arrived in Independence to spend the election night with his mother while he listened to the voting returns. That night, a little later than usual, he retired, realizing that he had been elected to the nation's second highest office—the office he had not wanted and had not sought.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### *Vice-President*

INAUGURAL DAY in Washington on January 20, 1945, was wet and raw and chilly, and the streets were slippery with a slow-falling rain. Many Congressmen who sat directly in front of the White House portico where the fourth term oath was administered to Franklin Delano Roosevelt remarked, upon returning to the Capitol, that the President seemed thin and strained. Several times he had gestured impatiently to those around him, and had flung aside nervously the blue navy cape that was draped round his shoulders.

There was a small luncheon after the ceremonies, but soon after Truman excused himself and accepted a ride to the Capitol with the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms, Wall Doxey, of Mississippi. When he returned to his desk the office was deserted except for two stenographers who were typing letters. He picked up the telephone and made a call to his mother in Grandview.

"Hello, Mummy, did you listen to the radio?" Truman asked.

"Yes," the aged woman answered. "I heard all of it. Now, Harry, you behave yourself up there! You behave yourself."

"I will."

The Vice-President embarked upon his new official duties with seriousness and hopefulness.

The relationship between the White House and Congress had deteriorated to an alarming degree. Sometimes for weeks

the President failed to consult Congressional leaders, or to advise them on legislative programmes. There had been one tremendous episode in February 1944, when Alben W. Barkley, the Majority Leader, broke openly with the President and bitterly denounced the Chief Executive's scathing and unfair veto message returning a defence tax bill. The veto had been overridden, Barkley had resigned in protest against the White House action, and was immediately re-elected unanimously by Democratic Senators, whose minds were well spoken by Tom Connally, of Texas, when he cried, "Make way for liberty."

Congress and the White House operated under an armistice rather than in a spirit of understanding and co-operation. Members of Congress complained bitterly that they were ill-informed on policy or developments. The President was so engrossed with the conduct of the war that he spent little time on domestic issues, leaving that job to James F. Byrnes without delegation of sufficient authority to cope with problems as they arose. The President seldom saw members of Congress. He was hermetically sealed off, as it were, from the national legislature, and such liaison as existed was inadequate and cursory.

Only the President could speak with finality on many problems and his voice was silent. It was impossible to reach him, and the advice and counsel of James F. Byrnes, or any of the Presidential secretaries, had often to be given with the qualification that even they did not know what was in the President's mind or what his plans were. They could not speak with authority, nor could they inform Congress accurately, because there were many things known only to the President or his closest military and civilian advisers. It was impossible for them to call in the Chief Executive to help iron out political friction in the Congress. Distrust of the President, rumours as to his health, thrusts at the men around him, were spreading like evil weeds.

Harry Truman embarked on the Vice-Presidency with a

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sincere desire to cure this noxious condition. The government of the United States—the co-operation between the White House and Congress—was distinctly unhealthy. On those fairly rare occasions when the leaders of Congress visited the President he did most of the talking, and only stout-hearted men, like Speaker Sam Rayburn, of Texas, ventured to debate policy with Roosevelt.

Truman explained to Senators, and to his close friends among the newsmen, that his aim was to bring about a better working arrangement between the two branches, to forestall if possible the great storm charging the atmosphere between the two and destined to burst almost the instant the war was won, when Congress should move to recapture the tremendous powers it has surrendered for the prosecution of the war.

Truman wanted and hoped to interpret and explain the executive policies and plans to the Senators—if necessary to defend them—and always to try to prevent misinterpretation. Truman even wanted to be an ex-officio member of Senate committees without a vote. With his wide knowledge of Senate affairs he could have rendered invaluable service; and he desired also to analyse and gauge for the President the mood, the thoughts, and the intentions of the Senate. In this manner—by acting as an adviser-plenipotentiary between the two branches—he believed he could bring about co-operation and understanding where it was most needed. But he could only do this if he had the President's full confidence and was constantly consulted on his plans and problems. Then by frank and friendly discussions in quiet, informal sessions with other Senators he could supply the link that had long been missing in the relationship between Congress and the President. He could not take the floor and debate issues. The office he held prevented that.

Truman did attend Cabinet sessions on several occasions, but they dealt mostly with departmental reports and were not generally fruitful of discussions which could guide him

in his job of tempering the minds of the Senators. Henry Wallace, as Vice-President, had attended Cabinet sessions regularly, but he had made no large group of friends in the Senate. He was received with a reserve that accentuated his own personal shyness, and if he knew much of departmental doings or policy he made little or no effort to explain them to members of the Senate. Liaison and understanding had deteriorated during his four-year term as the Senate's presiding officer.

It is a peculiarity of the United States Government that the officer next in succession to the Presidency is comparatively insulated from that high office which he must assume upon the death of the President. There is little in the duties of the Vice-President as the mere presiding officer of the Senate that equips him for succession to the Presidency. He is neither of the legislative branch nor the executive; his burden of routine duties as the Senate's presiding officer gives him little time to study the work of governmental departments, or their policies, other than the points he picks up while ruling over the debate on the Senate floor. Seldom is he taken fully into the confidence of the executive. He is left, rather, to shift for himself, and in case of the death of the President he must accede to that office comparatively unschooled in its problems and official secrets.

Harry Truman had hoped to bring something of a marriage of minds between the Senate and the White House. Instead he found that as Vice-President he was expected to attend social functions as a sort of travelling, wining, and dining ambassador of the White House, and the invitations poured in upon him and Bess Truman in an avalanche. All the embassies, most of the Senators, and the leading social families sent invitations to the Trumans, loaded up the sideboards with liquors and delicacies, and prepared for festivities. Harry and Bess Truman did their gracious best. On some nights there were as many as three cocktail parties and a dinner-party, and seldom a morning passed that Washingtonians

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did not find on the social page a report that the evening before the Trumans had attended a dinner as guests of honour, or a cocktail party, or a reception, or a concert. It was a wearying, unbroken round of gold service and gilt braid and small talk. Had the Vice-President accepted the drinks proffered him he would have lapsed into dipsomania within days, for not even the hardiest constitution could withstand Washington's liquor cabinets pouring at their tidal best. He formed a habit of accepting a drink, taking a sip, and then carrying it in his hand for the rest of the evening, or until he and Mrs Truman could gracefully bid their hosts good evening and proceed to the next engagement.

Truman had assumed his social obligations largely because he knew that he could learn from the important people he would meet, particularly members of the diplomatic corps stationed in Washington. Just as he had studied the thinking and behaviour of the Senators during his first term, now his mind swept up whatever information it could gather from the frequently authoritative and usually uninhibited conversation that flowed in a copious tide whenever the party hour arrived. Business and political talks, hints of impending events in other countries, and even bits of gossip about embassy officials were all filed neatly away for future reference.

But the social regimen interfered seriously with his studies, and placed a heavy strain on the home. He seldom had an opportunity to scatter the dining-room table with committee hearings and departmental reports and search through them for information which was needed if he were to discharge fully the responsibilities he believed to be attached to his office.

After no more than two months of this social whirl, Vice-President Truman confided that it was becoming a bore-some, deadly grind ; that he felt he had learned all he could and that he was being swamped not because he was Harry Truman from Lamar, Missouri, but because having the Vice-President to table amounted to something of a social *tour*

*de force* in Washington. He was hunting desperately for some means whereby he could cut down his social engagements drastically and enlarge his own work-schedule—the work he wanted to do and felt he should do—accordingly.

He said that he felt he was not elected a social lion, nor was it his job to be one. And he planned to begin accepting fewer and fewer invitations, limiting his social activities only to those diplomatic and state affairs which it was imperative that he attend. He much preferred to hold open house in his richly appointed office just off the Senate reading-room, where he kept the fire-place a-crackle with burning logs. Here he received, when not presiding in the Chamber a dozen steps away, an almost steady procession of delegations inviting him to make speeches, write magazine articles, award diplomas; or Senators dropped in to discuss Senate business and exchange confidences. At such times Harry Truman was at his best. His military aide, Colonel Harry H. Vaughan, his old companion of war days, acted as receptionist and host in the absence of the Vice-President. He was an expert ‘strainer,’ who culled out of the callers all nuisances and the scores of unwanted visitors whose purposes were to burden the Vice-President with worries by pleading for all sorts of favours.

Soon after Truman became Vice-President the mail-bags carried into his office were bulging. Many of these letters were written by frantic wives, mothers, or sweethearts pleading that he “get John out of the Army.”

The Vice-President adopted an inflexible rule: never to bring any pressure to obtain the release of a military man. The war, as he well knew, was not won. It had still to be fought and it could best be brought to a victorious conclusion without political interference. Harry Vaughan answered all such letters under his own—not the Vice-President’s—signature. He would advise the family to make affidavits of its hardship, send these to the soldier, and let him make application for discharge to his commanding officer in the

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usual way. Truman did not interfere with the military, and he left to Colonel Vaughan the responsibility of handling these hundreds of requests as politely and informally as was possible.

The rapprochement which Truman had so hopefully planned to foster between the executive and Congress was rudely jolted at the very outset, and the Vice-President did his best to repair the damage caused by a manoeuvre of which he was not forewarned, and about which he was not even consulted. Two days before the inauguration on Saturday he had chatted with Henry A. Wallace, the retiring Vice-President, and gave Wallace every opportunity to advise him of the Cabinet appointment that Wallace would request and undoubtedly receive from the President. The retiring Vice-President was, as usual, shyly uncommunicative and reticent. He told Harry Truman nothing.

On Sunday—the day after the inaugural ceremonies—President Roosevelt left Washington to proceed to the Yalta Conference, but not until he had rocked the city by his curt dismissal of Jesse Jones, of Texas, from the Cabinet position of Secretary of Commerce. As Mr Roosevelt's dismissal letter, released by Jones, disclosed, the change was made because Henry Wallace, who had long feuded with the Secretary, desired the Cabinet post, felt he could fill it successfully, and because of his campaign support in 1944 was entitled to it as a matter of political reward. In 1940 Congress, with the President's approval, had passed a Bill allowing Jones to hold both the Secretaryship of Commerce and the post of Federal Loan Administrator, thereby retaining his influence and direction over the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and dozens of other agencies equipped and authorized to award tens of billions of dollars in loans. Jones had retained both jobs, and it was now proposed to march him off the plank and install Henry Wallace in these positions.

Hardly anything could have more enraged the conservatives of Congress. There was no warning of the move, though



Washington had been alive and crawling with rumours that centred on Wallace. Jesse Jones was popular with Congress. He had dealt with it for thirteen years, and he thought in the conservative terms of many of the most powerful Senators—men like Walter George, of Georgia, Josiah Bailey, of North Carolina, Tom Connally, of Texas, and Republicans Robert Taft, of Ohio, and Arthur H. Vandenberg, of Michigan.

This state of affairs disturbed Truman's sense of orderly procedure. Moreover, he would not stand by and see the wedge of discord driven deeper into the vitals of the Democratic Party. He decided he would try to mend the breach by personal appeal and by advising the Democratic National Committee where to apply pressure on certain Senators, and how. He knew that he was beaten before he started, and largely because he had no forewarning, because the dismissal of Jones was done in such a manner as he himself would have advised against. Its bluntness had prejudiced Wallace's entire case in the Senate. For weeks the controversy swirled through the Senate. Walter George introduced a Bill divesting the Secretary of Commerce of control of the governmental lending agencies. Then the Senate decided to withhold confirmation until Roosevelt—then in Yalta—made the Bill law. Bailey, of North Carolina, chairman of the Commerce Committee which reported adversely on Wallace's nomination for Secretary, had almost upset the Administration. Harry Truman had talked for nearly two hours one night with Senator Bailey, pleading with him to allow the passage of the George Bill and not to attempt first to pressure a vote on Wallace's confirmation. Truman had advised this as the only Administration course. Only six times in history had the Senate rejected Cabinet nominations, most of these occurring seventy-five years before. Yet there was no doubt that in its present temper the Senate, if forced to vote first on Wallace's confirmation, would reject it. And Bailey was adamant. Nothing would alter his

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determination to beat Wallace by getting a vote ahead of the George Bill.

Truman and the Senate leaders then changed tactics. They began rounding up votes to beat Bailey's attempt to force first an executive session for a vote on Wallace's nomination. When the day arrived Bailey insisted upon making his motion for the Senate to resolve into executive session and consider the nomination. The vote was a tie, forty-two to forty-two, and the motion was defeated. Robert Taft, of Ohio, quickly changed his vote to the negative—in order to be able to move for a reconsideration, with the hope and expectation that some votes could be picked up against Wallace on the reconsideration roll-call.

Barkley, the Majority Leader and an adroit parliamentarian, was on his feet and instantly moved for the consideration of the George Bill. Taft protested, saying that the reconsideration had to come first, but Truman ruled that he had yielded the floor. Later that day Barkley waved a slip of paper and then read it. It was a message relayed from the President stating that he would sign the measure. The George Bill was passed, eventually signed, and Wallace was confirmed as Secretary of Commerce without control over the lending agencies.

The appointment of Aubrey Williams as head of the Rural Electrification Administration raised another storm in the Senate, immediately after the battle over Henry Wallace had subsided. Again the conservatives were in an uproar, and although Truman had no advance warning of the appointment, and no chance to advise that it would raise a tempest in the Senate, he went to work to organize support for Williams's confirmation. But this could not be done, and Williams was rejected. The understanding which Truman had hoped to effect, and the co-operation for which he had strained, were both at low tide.

Truman did succeed in one great effort at rapprochement. Immediately after the President's return from the Yalta Conference he got in touch with the White House

and earnestly advised that President Roosevelt appear before Congress and report in person on the crucial negotiations. He advocated it for a multiplicity of reasons: first, there were the recurrent rumours that the President was dying, that he was ill and distraught and incapacitated—rumours fanned to a fury by the death of the Presidential Aide, Edwin M. Watson, on the return trip. Second, there were the wild rumours of secret deals and allied enmities occurring at Yalta. Third, the eve of victory over Germany was almost at hand, and the peace treaty would have to be submitted for ratification by a two-thirds vote of the Senate, and it was imperative that the President make some gesture of official friendliness and understanding towards that body without which no plans or negotiations of the Executive could be consummated into permanent international commitments.

The Senate could make or break Franklin D. Roosevelt just as it had, twenty-five years before, broken Woodrow Wilson. It was time for a showing of friendliness and consideration by the President, and in making it the President could do much to scotch the waves of rumours that were agitating Washington and the country.

Truman did not talk personally to Mr Roosevelt about this proposal; the President was virtually inaccessible, engrossed with the conduct of the war and his plans for peace. But the Vice-President did talk earnestly to James F. Byrnes and to the White House secretariat. President Roosevelt agreed, and on March 1 he delivered his report to Congress.

It was not a great report. It told nothing new. It was an admission that many differences between the Allied powers were compromised at Yalta, some in a way that was not wholly satisfactory. The effect of the report on the nation, however, was good. The President was alive and active. The Yalta Agreements did not wholly compromise the high idealism of America. They seemed to be the best obtainable, and gave promise of better future understandings.

What Harry Truman must have felt as he sat on the

raised marble dais behind the President, with Speaker Sam Rayburn of the House, he never said publicly. But that day he knew instinctively that a mountain of responsibility must inevitably fall on his own square shoulders. To the acute observer it was apparent that Congress and the world were not only witnessing a report on the Yalta Conference; they were watching the last tremendous acts of a gigantic man. He had abandoned the torturing steel leg-supports that enabled him to stand, and addressed the Congress from a chair after being wheeled into the Chamber. The once resonant voice—which Latin Americans poetically called "the tenor of the air waves"—midway in the speech faltered, thickened almost to indistinctness, then finally cleared. His skin was an unhealthy colour despite the sun and freshness of his recent sea voyage—a trip which in times past would have served to reinvigorate and restore. The hands once sure and certain—hands that did not hesitate to grasp the throttle of the most complicated machinery with every confidence of running it safely and aright—trembled.

Harry Truman, Vice-President, the deeply sincere and singularly unmarked man, had often prayed in the quiet of his home for God to sustain and strengthen the President and carry him through the great responsibilities and task upon which he had embarked the nation. He wanted Roosevelt to finish the job, and in the days following the report to Congress on March 1 he sought again and again the highest help for the President.

Truman curtailed drastically his own social activities, and began to devote his energies almost exclusively to his work. In the quiet of his modest apartment, sometimes at one o'clock in the morning, he did some of the hardest thinking he had ever done in his life. Harry Truman was not back on the front line of firing again, but he was moving up, just as he had moved into the Vosges, to Saint-Mihiel, to the Argonne, to Verdun.

Truman knew, perhaps better than anyone in Washington,

that any President must have the friendly assistance of Congress. He knew intimately every detail of how a rebellious, revolutionary Congress working under the brutal lash of Thaddeus Stevens had wrecked and ruined the administration of Andrew Johnson after the Civil War, and reduced to nothing the high ideals which Abraham Lincoln had held for a just peace that would heal the tremendous economic, physical, and social wounds inflicted upon a devastated South—wounds that even yet were mentioned in Congressional debate and reflected in the struggle over legislation.

Truman had supported Sam Rayburn for the Vice-Presidency, and had switched to Byrnes only after Rayburn had withdrawn from any hope or attempt to obtain the nomination. He felt that here, in this rugged Texas rancher, a man of common sense and unvarnished honesty, was a person whose judgment he could trust, whose advice he could seek honestly and openly, and whose desire was above all other things to help. Sam Rayburn had often sacrificed himself for the Roosevelt Administration, yielding his own political hopes for the good of the Democratic Party. He was a gentleman of courage and judgment, and Harry Truman wanted his advice, trusted it, and felt that he needed it. Back in 1918, when Harry Truman was a captain, and later, while his deepest cares were the hay crop rotting in the field under a heavy Missouri rain, Sam Rayburn was a member of Congress and performing ably and honestly in the affairs of the nation. He was equipped by long experience and intimate knowledge of both the affairs and officials of government to render sage advice.

Sam Rayburn could help.

The Speaker also maintains a small office affectionately called the 'Board of Education,' the institution started by the former Vice-President Garner. The telephone number is restricted, given out only to intimate friends. Here the Speaker gathers his intimate friends and advisers. The talk is personal, direct, and unembellished by such terms as "Mr

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Speaker" or "Mr President." Here it is "Sam" and "Harry." The conversation is open, and the rule is that such meetings are unalterably 'off the record.' No one has yet violated the Speaker's hospitality or his trust by carrying from this inner sanctum reports of the conversations indulged or the ideas exchanged there.

Vice-President Truman turned to the man he respected and trusted, Speaker Rayburn—the man whose personal appeal to members of the House is a legend of effectiveness. "I'm going over to the 'Board of Education' to talk to Sam Rayburn," Truman often said during his short Vice-Presidency.

To a friend who met him in the Capitol one day he remarked, "You notice I'm going over to Sam's." It was his way of doing things. The Vice-President outranks the Speaker, but Truman did not consider that that entitled him to summon Rayburn—far from it. He would pay the call and ask counsel.

These two men further cemented their friendship. They met often in the 'Board of Education,' and Sam Rayburn invited in friends from the House that they might know and understand the mild, earnest man who might one day be President.

It was with Sam Rayburn that Truman had gone on his only fishing excursion while Vice-President—an outing that might have ended in tragedy.

Together with the Speaker and a small party Truman went to a little lake in eastern Maryland to spend the weekend, casting for bass. It was early spring, and the Vice-President rowed while the others fished, for he liked the muscular exercise, but cared little for catching the hard-striking fish that hit the bait in a flash and fight with frenzy to escape the hook. Instead he joked with his companions about their having a 15,000-dollar-a-year oarsman.

Truman did not wet a line that day. Returning, the party had to row up a swift-flowing river. Truman was tired of

working the oars and stood up to change seats with the Negro boatman. The boat rocked heavily. Truman lost his balance and fell with a splash into twelve feet of icy water. In falling he grabbed the side of the boat with one hand, but his head went completely below the surface.

When the others helped him back into the boat Truman laughed heartily. "You just go on and catch the fish, Sam," he remarked as he wrapped up in a blanket, "and I'll do the swimming!"

Harry Truman felt that he had not achieved the full possibilities of the Vice-Presidency. He had fallen short of the great objective which he set for himself—of bringing the legislative and executive minds into tune—because he could not get all the co-operation he needed. He could detect raucously discordant notes, and they jarred him as much as to hear a Beethoven sonata grievously played.

In quiet talks with his closest friends he confessed that he had not achieved his great purpose. Why? Because he was not privy to Administration plans and politics. He was not consulted on its programmes, nor was his advice and counsel sought. His was the job of coming in to repair, as best he could, the damage after it had been created by some announcement or action, rather than that of preventing the debacle by prior consultation. He was not advised of or consulted upon the Henry Wallace or Aubrey Williams appointments; he was given no notice of the secret agreement at Yalta whereby Russia would ask and receive support for three votes in the Assembly of Nations. He did not know what was in the President's mind, or his advisers'. He knew nothing of the secrets of policy, nor was he consulted before arrangements were consummated. The voting arrangement concluded at Yalta raised an uproar in the Senate and deeply disturbed Senator Vandenberg, whose co-operation and support were conceded to be essential to the ratification of any treaty concluded for the future maintenance of peace. Truman was as surprised as anyone else, not excepting the

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Secretary of State, Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., who had come away from Yalta apparently with no knowledge of this secret arrangement between Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill. But Truman defended the agreement to other Senators and did his level best to argue down the misgivings with which they received the surprising disclosure.

He was not given the opportunity to explain, because no explanations or intelligences were communicated to him. He was deprived of the opportunity to prevent clashes because his advice was not sought in advance. The nearly three months of being Vice-President were, for Truman, not exactly happy or rich with accomplishment. But the fault was not his.

It was on Wednesday afternoon, April 11, that he was chatting with a group of journalists in the front of the Senate immediately after adjournment. They were twitting him about his office, and calling him "Mr President."

"Boys," said Truman, "those are fighting words out in Missouri, where I came from. You'd better smile when you say that! You know right here is where I've always wanted to be, and the only place I ever wanted to be. The Senate—that's just my speed and my style."



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### *The President*

THE hands of the black clock standing on the mantelpiece over the marble fire-place in Speaker Rayburn's 'Board of Education' office pointed at ten minutes past five on the afternoon of April 12, 1945. There were three men in the room: Speaker Rayburn, Lewis Deschler the parliamentarian of the House of Representatives, and James Barnes, a sandy-haired man whom President Roosevelt had chosen as one of his executive assistants following Barnes's defeat for re-election to Congress in 1942.

The Speaker's private 'Board of Education' room is tucked away at the southern end of the Capitol Building, being a comfortable room, but gloomy in some respects. Little light is admitted through the windows. Decorations and colours are almost entirely absent, and the faded flower design on the rug is frayed and worn thin.

One wall of the room comprises glassed-in book-cupboards without books. Instead the Speaker has filled the cases with unframed photographs, autographed for him by members of Congress. In front of these cabinets stands a plain mahogany desk, and to the left a nook with a wash-basin, running water, and face towels. Near by is a small electric refrigerator.

A wide, black leather couch and six leather-upholstered easy chairs are placed around informally; a tall mirror hangs over the fire-place above the clock. And in a niche at the opposite end of the room hangs an oil painting of the

Speaker, lighted by a special lamp. The kindly eyes of the portrait seem to take in every movement in the room.

The telephone on the desk rang abruptly and Deschler said he would answer, but Speaker Rayburn took the call. It was the White House Secretary, Stephen T. Early, asking for the Vice-President. Early had just telephoned the Vice-President's office and learned that Truman was on his way to Rayburn's 'Board of Education' to pay an unofficial call. Early's voice sounded strained and agitated.

Almost as Rayburn replaced the receiver after promising Early to get the Vice-President to return the call Harry Truman stepped into the room. He was wearing a double-breasted grey suit with his bronze army discharge pin in the left lapel. The folds of his bow-tie were neatly in place.

"Hello, Sam," he grinned, and likewise greeted the other two men.

He was about to sit down in one of the comfortable leather chairs when Rayburn advised him of the White House call.

"I'll get them for you, Harry," the Speaker said.

"No, I'll do it." Truman smiled as he picked up the telephone and asked for the White House. He got Early and said, "This is the Vice-President." The others in the room sat quietly while Truman listened intently, and said abruptly, "All right," and then hung up. As he turned away from the telephone there was a noticeable trace of anxiety in his countenance. His face turned pale. Drawing deep breath, he suddenly blurted out, "Holy General Jackson: Steve Early wants me at the White House immediately!"

Then, recovering his composure, he said, half in a whisper, "Boys, this is in the room. Keep this quiet. Something must have happened."

Rayburn had laid down his cigarette in a glass ash-tray. Smoke twisted and curled upward towards the ceiling, almost enveloping the silence in the room.

The Capitol was practically deserted, and no sounds came in from the corridors outside—just a moment of utter stillness

made eloquent only by the thoughts of the four men in the room. Each was thinking the same thing but dared not speak it.

"I'll get your hat," Deschler said.

"I left it over at my office. I'll get it there," Truman replied as he stood at the door. His face was now nearly the colour of chalk.

"Harry, we'll stand by you," Rayburn said feelingly.

"Good-bye," said Truman gravely. In an instant he was gone.

It was only 5.15 by the mantelpiece clock when he closed the door and the latch clicked in the lock. A few minutes later George Donovan, the Speaker's chauffeur, telephoned and said, "Mr Rayburn, a newspaper-man just told me—the President is dead!"

Within half an hour there was another call; this one was from Harry Truman in the White House. He wanted the Speaker and other Congressional leaders to come at once. He had raced back to his office to get his hat, and then had been driven to the White House quietly and quickly in his official car. He went, as directed, to the sitting-room of the big executive mansion; and there Mrs Roosevelt, calm and completely in control of her feelings, had told him that the President had passed away.

"What can I do?" Truman asked simply.

"Tell us, what can we do to help you?" the tall woman asked firmly.

Word of the President's death was spreading like wild-fire, and within what seemed a matter of moments a crowd of some three thousand had gathered in Lafayette Park directly across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House. They stood and looked, shifting from one foot to another and talking in hushed tones. A woman sobbed. A child pointed at a squirrel jumping in the trees. The crowd kept staring at the familiar building across the street as if they could see what was happening inside.

In the mansion there was the wildest confusion as more than a hundred reporters raced and ran about for scraps of information, then hurried to the Press room near the Executive Chambers to relay the news to their offices. Camera-men pushed through to positions of vantage. News-reel and Radio men strung and uncoiled wires and cable through the length of the lobby. The Cabinet had met with the Vice-President. The Chief Justice, Harlan Fiske Stone, was on his way to administer the Presidential oath. Members of Congress were hurrying in. Some of the Cabinet men had broken down and were openly weeping. Bess Truman and Mary Margaret were coming to witness the taking of the oath. Cabinet members had offered their resignations, but Truman had asked them all to stay on for the present.

After two frantic hours—at exactly 7.09 P.M.—in the presence of the grief-stricken Cabinet and leaders of Congress, Chief Justice Stone, in a plain dark suit, lifted up a Bible which had been hastily brought from one of the White House offices, held up his right hand, and solemnly administered the oath of the President of the United States. Truman repeated the words with his hand placed firmly on the Holy Book.

The heaviest of all loads, the insufferable burden that tires and kills even as it confers honours and historical significance upon all who assume it, had fallen upon this quiet, plain-spoken man who thirty years before had imagined for himself the life of a Missouri farmer.

Eleanor Roosevelt immediately left by plane for Warm Springs, Georgia, to accompany the President's body on the long funeral train back to Washington and then to Hyde Park, where the grave was already being prepared at the ancestral estate. The body would not lie in state.

The swearing-in of Harry S. Truman as the thirty-second President of the United States was a tense and strained occasion. But after Truman had taken the oath and had shaken hands with the Chief Justice the United States had a

President whose motto had long been, "It's what you learn after you know it all that counts."

He is a man poured evenly into the mould of the American people. A small-town boy born in modest circumstances, then a drugstore helper at three dollars a week, then newsboy, railway worker, bank clerk, farmer, soldier, manager of a clothing-store that failed, county judge, Senator and chairman of an important Senate committee, Vice-President, and finally President of the United States. There had been no social or economic barriers nor revolutionary upheavals. Lack of wealth, privilege, or a college education had made no difference. It was the precise pattern of the American success story. Little Johnny Jones living down the road in the brick house—he could be President some day. And so could Jimmy Smith who works after school delivering grocery orders. It had all been a perfectly natural and orderly process. And there he was—an ordinary common-sense citizen occupying the nation's highest office. In more than a century and a half of American history the same thing had happened many times.

The only peculiarity was that, to Harry Truman's way of thinking, his arrival came by accident and not from choice. He had not sought the office nor strived for it. Yet his mind and heart were sympathetic and attuned to the ideas and ideals of the people, and this gave him the strength to shoulder the burden. His approach to the Presidency might be expressed in the words of the former Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, who said in his speech when addressing an anniversary meeting of Congress with the executive and judicial branches of government:

We are not here as masters, but as servants—not to glory in power, but to attest our loyalty to the commands and restrictions laid down by our sovereign, the people of the United States, in whose name and by whose will we exercise our brief authority.

John Nance Garner, of Texas, had often made the sage observation that the United States did not want a brilliant

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President, or need one, for such a man would get too far ahead of the country. In Harry Truman the people have a President who claims no brilliance, who recognizes his own limitations and those of his people and from that very fact derives the capacity to lead. By depreciating his own worth and in his earnest desire to give the other man the benefit of doubts, he understands clearly and can closely gauge the will of the majority, and the rights of the few.

But there were burning questions on that night of April 12, 1945, that flared brightly and ominously. Can Harry Truman measure up to the Presidency? What did this sudden though simple fact of death mean to America? Could it survive such a staggering shock in the midst of world conflict? The buoyant force of Franklin Roosevelt had almost completely dwarfed and obscured the qualities that reposed in his successor to office. And Harry Truman discounted himself. That had always been part of his success. It could also mean his failure if the people now discounted him.

So-called personalized government had reached a high level of expression under President Roosevelt, a situation that the public sensed but did not fully comprehend. Under ordinary circumstances even an unusually brilliant man entering upon the Presidency from the Vice-Presidency does so with considerable lack of information regarding official policy, departmental affairs, and the countless problems and arrangements peculiar to the executive branch. Personalized government tends to magnify and aggravate this handicap. Under Roosevelt it had reached a point where the task thrust upon Harry Truman was made inordinately difficult and complex. War was flaming on two fronts, and the world was writhing under the impact of revolutionary forces that no man could yet fully understand. Casualty lists were reaching appalling totals. And only the framework of an international peace plan had been formed. Roosevelt had led the nation within sight of victory. But he had largely served as his own Cabinet. His policies were those he had evolved him-

self with the reasons known mostly only to himself. There was no group of men in the Government who could be called in to give the new President the intimate details nor even the general background essential to a thorough understanding of the immediate problems faced by the man occupying the President's chair at that moment.

On the day of Franklin Roosevelt's death Edward J. Flynn, a political leader in New York State, was on a delicate, private diplomatic mission for the President, apparently seeking to arrange some rapprochement between Soviet Russia and the Vatican. Only he and the deceased President knew the instructions and the duties he was to perform under them.

Myron C. Taylor, President Roosevelt's personal envoy to the Vatican, occupied a similar status. Judge Samuel I. Rosenman was in Europe on a special food mission for the dead President. Ambassador Patrick J. Hurley was in Moscow dealing with the Soviet Union after completing conferences in London while *en route* back to his post in Chungking, China.

Hurley's mission was also highly confidential. For months he had been striving ineffectually to bring some area of agreement between China's central Government, as represented by Chiang Kai-shek, and the Communist groups. Much depended on the attitude that Russia would take in this dispute, and whether Josef Stalin would interest himself actively in behalf of the Communists. Hurley alone, operating under special instructions of the President, knew the full purview of his authority and the extent of the propositions he was warranted to make as a representative of President Roosevelt.

Harry Hopkins lay ill at the Mayo clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. He had acted as Mr Roosevelt's confidant and adviser for, many believed, too many years. No one, including the Department of State, knew what other arrangements may have been concluded at Yalta between Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill. The secret agreement to support the Russian claim for three votes in the Assembly of Nations, when

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disclosed, came as a shock and a warning that still other undisclosed bargains may have been struck. President Truman could not and did not know anything about these arrangements. The Administration, as he had complained, had made little effort to take him into its confidence. He saw Roosevelt infrequently and on such occasions the discussion seldom involved the more important matters of world policy and high governmental affairs.

Such realizations as these caused apprehension on the night of Franklin Roosevelt's death. It was felt that Truman in his emergence from comparative obscurity had to set out upon his task like a man groping in an unlighted corridor between two dark rooms. In many ways the very future of the world depended upon what he did. And he was not trained to think in cosmic terms. He lacked the inspiring touch and the flair for dealing in vast schemes and philosophies of global government.

Fears on the night of Roosevelt's passing were founded on ignorance not merely of one man but of 139,000,000 people and their form of government. Actually Harry Truman had only to set out and prove what had often been demonstrated in the past—that the American people are capable of wise and progressive self-government. They function best when hampered least. The brilliant victories of American armies in the field of battle and the miracle of American war production resulted from the exercise of the collective wits of many, not from the brains of a few.

Consequently Truman's accession to the Presidency places squarely upon the people and their chosen representatives in Congress a heavy responsibility. This they have already sensed. Moreover, it is apparent that Harry Truman is well qualified to be President, as Roosevelt himself thoroughly understood. However, co-operation and support will insure his success. Scepticism and thoughtless criticism can only serve to hamper his efforts.

In Congress there are other men like Harry Truman.



For many years he was included in the more representative and progressive elements in the United States Senate. Their problems were also his problems. Together they were guided by much the same motives and thought generally along similar lines. Working together again, Truman freely predicts that he can give the country a stable and constructive administration.

The very nature and character of the new President will tend to eliminate bitter factional strife. Truman pledged himself to carry out the policies of Roosevelt, and this he will do wherever the course is clearly charted. When the objectives become blurred and indistinct he will strike out on his own with inclinations that allow free play of the checks and balances of the constitutional system. Since he is not bound nor influenced by the various minority pressure-groups, he need *not* nourish inherited political controversies. His political acumen and wide experience in public affairs will help him to tread carefully, avoiding the arena of the more radical elements, while also revising the policies which the Republicans so bitterly complained of during the "twelve long years" under Roosevelt. Harry Truman can be counted on to stretch and staple his political fences as expertly as he wired in the pasture lands out on the farm.

Truman can provide stability and continuity of foreign policy. He need not try to sweep all the corners clean at once, and can rely on the counsel of many men designated by Roosevelt who have great knowledge and understanding of foreign Governments. Truman has no campaign obligations and so can make his changes quietly and deliberately. Moreover, with the help of a Congress which he knows and understands, a more realistic approach can be smoothly effected.

His own personal lack of knowledge in foreign affairs he has already largely overcome. Being President, he has access to exclusive sources of information. His broad understanding of history and the long service he saw in the United

States Senate, particularly as chairman of the Truman Committee, provide him with the most specialized type of experience.

Truman is averse to 'palace politics' and believes in appointments made under statutory grants of authority with the duties clearly set forth. He views with suspicion those advisers who operate outside the scope of established office. He picks able men and upholds them. If they fail he favours their replacement.

However, since Truman came into the White House along the loyal party campaign route, thousands who can claim they supported him will descend upon Washington in search of special favours. Conniving cliques and intrigues sprout like weeds in the atmosphere of immense power embodying the Office of the President. The authority to confer favours and honours carries within it a tendency to make mistakes. Not every-one by any means visits the White House with sincere and altruistic purposes. Too often there are selfish, greedy, or dishonest motives involved. Ugly scandal can result if private desires are not thoroughly understood and accurately appraised with favours conferred only within proper limits. Truman is well aware of this source of evil and so far has successfully avoided stepping into the pitfall.

In the final analysis the trend of world events will largely shape the acts of Truman's Administration. From the swift currents of war and the whirlpools of economic upheaval flow the changes that will determine the course of America's future destiny. Harry Truman is confident as this destiny approaches. He has often observed,

Not everything in war is on the debit side. War does not permit going back to the old way of doing things. . . . It shakes our very foundations, but what is best in them is so obviously right and needed that it is strong enough to survive. . . . In peace-time it is easy to do business at the old stand in the time-honoured way . . . and to follow the old maxim of 'let well enough alone.'

America has a great future after the war . . . a prosperity

T H I S   M A N   T R U M A N

beyond anything we have ever had before is available to us. . . .  
If we fail the failure will be due to ourselves and not to our  
lack of opportunity.

In the quiet of meditation Harry Truman can also reflect upon his own destiny. Perhaps his voice will even say, "This is just where I want to be—here in the White House as President of the United States." He has to learn his job the hard way, but that has always been part of his life. His confidence in himself was expressed in the words he spoke so devoutly in his first address to Congress: "I ask only to be a good and faithful servant of my Lord and my people."



